フェアトラク寓話

Vartrag Tale

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沖麻実也

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VARTRAG TALE

MAMIYA ŌKI PRESENTS

When he was only five years old, the lonely boy Ralph made a pact with a demon. The promised seven years passed as he dreamed of the day he would once again meet the kind, eccentric demon Eck. However, there is one more condition he has to fulfill...!?

Vartrag Tale
Mitsuba Oki
Vartrag Tale
M
scans:
LadyMagisa
translation:
Kalendel
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Bohlumdall
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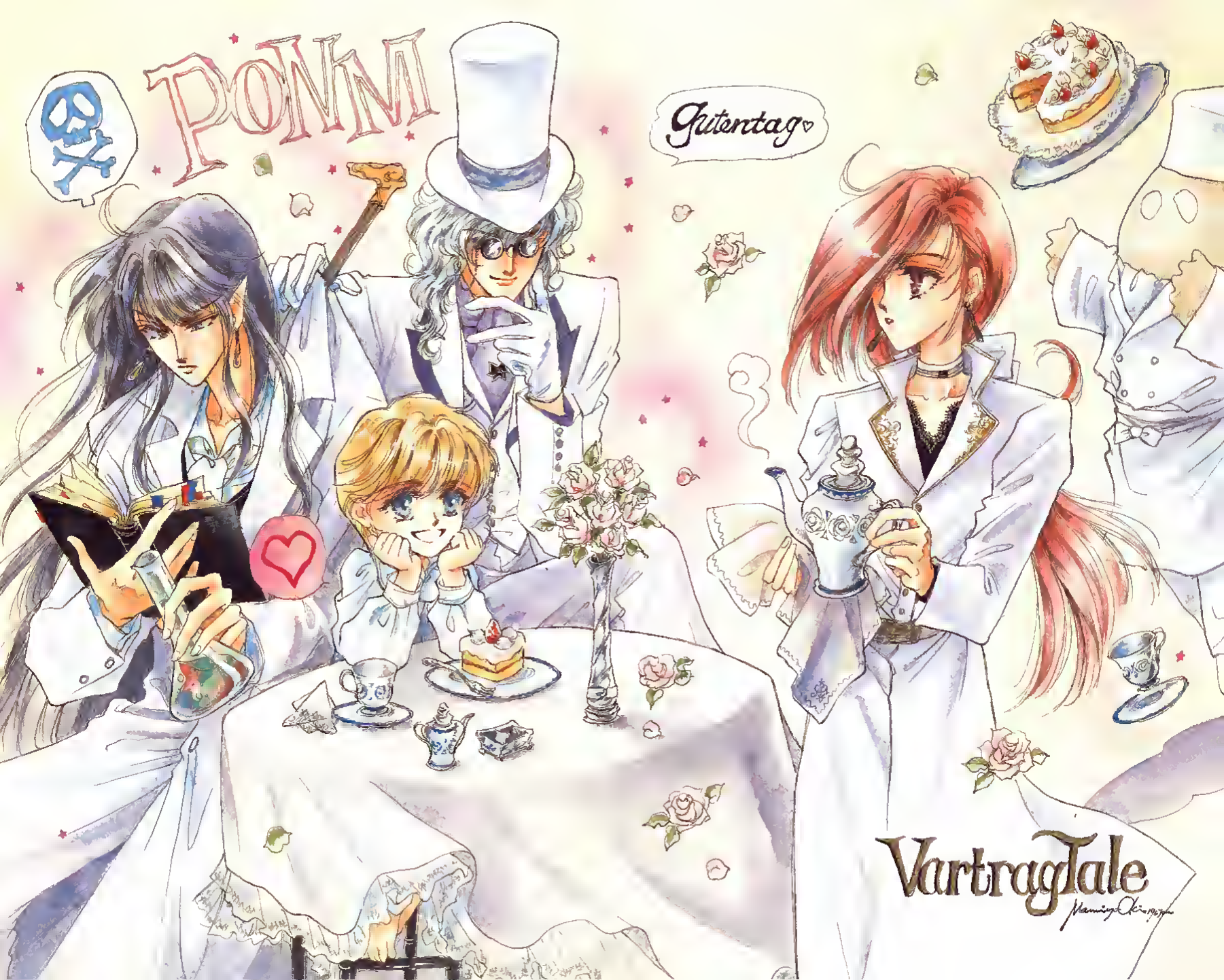
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Guten tag♡
VortragTale

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Vartrag Tale

沖 麻実也

Mamiya Oki

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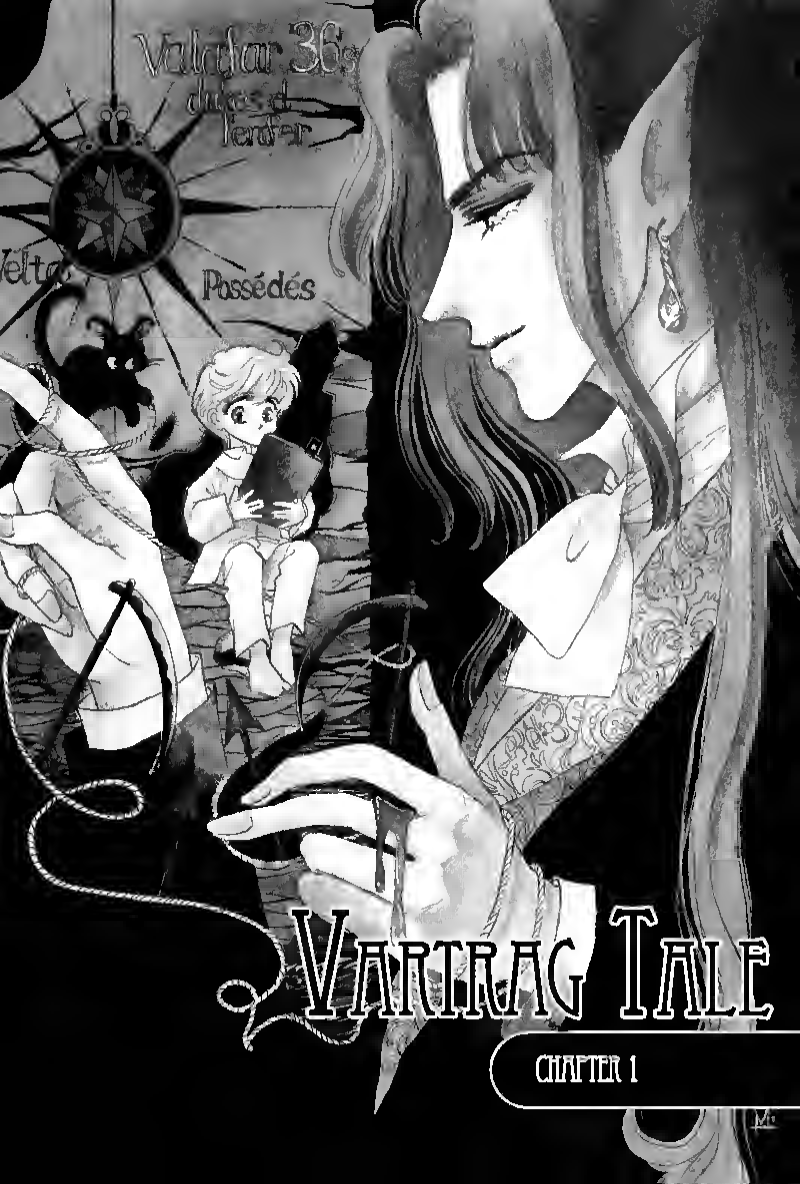
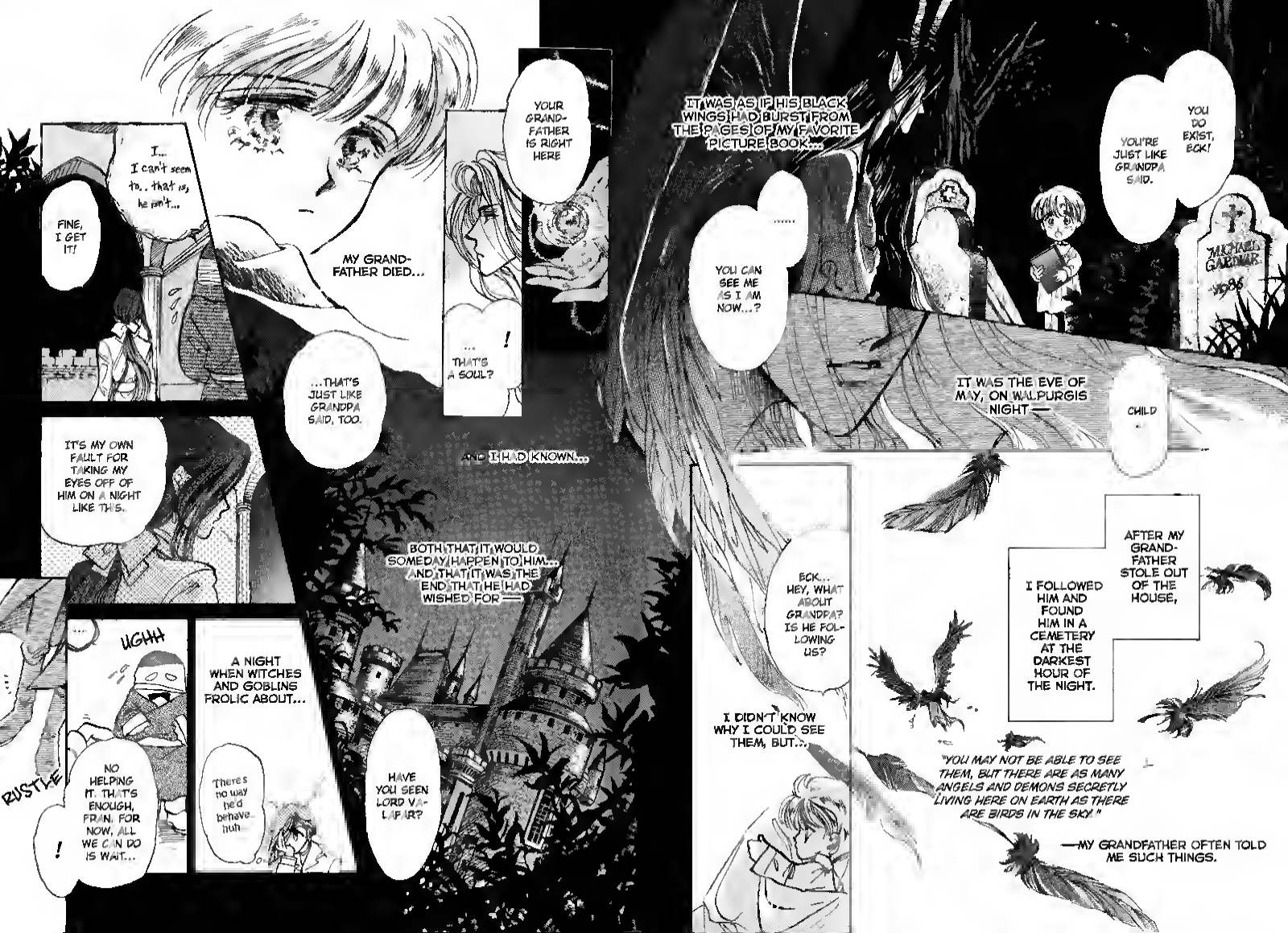


VARTRAG TALE

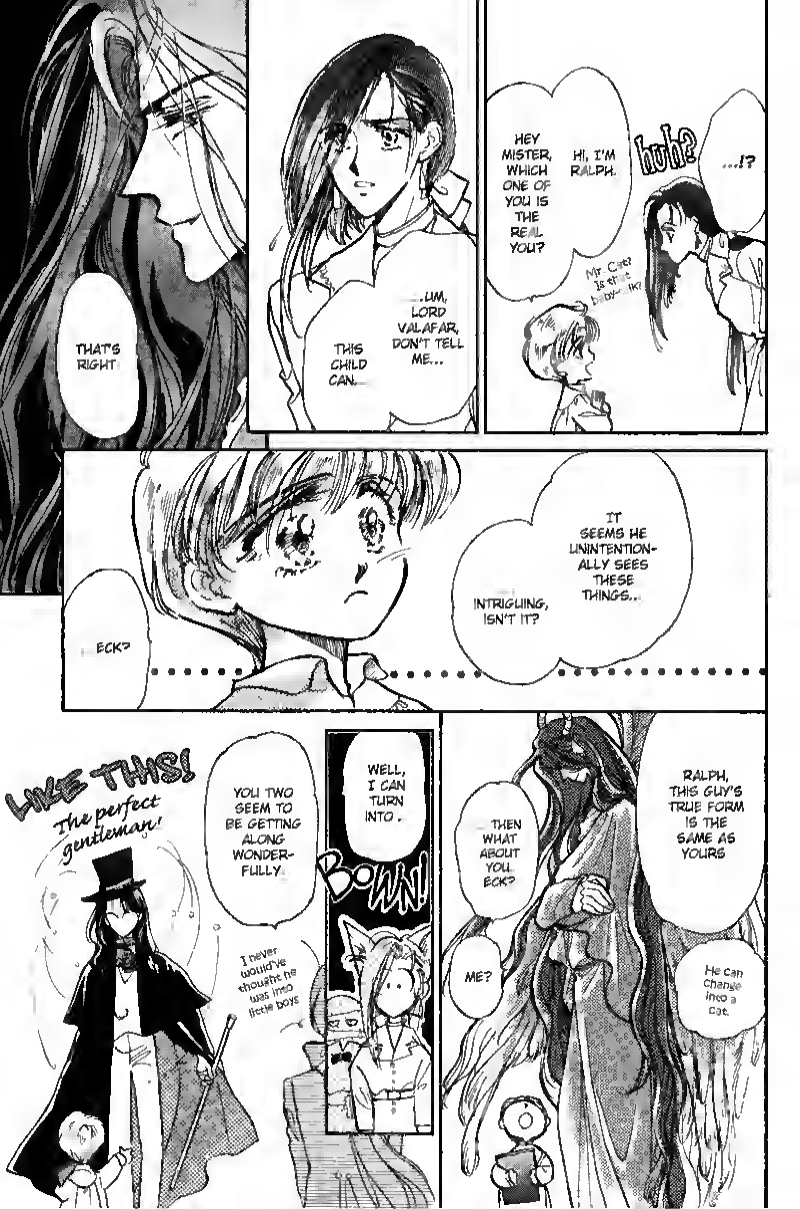
CHAPTER 1

RUSTLE
BUT, WELL, I SUPPOSE THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT.
THIS MUST BE FATE AS WELL.
RALPH. B
"RALPH. B"
Castle
.. YOU'RE THERE, AREN'T YOU?
EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T SEE YOU, I CAN TELL
Whoosh
THANKS TO YOU, I WAS ABLE TO TRULY ENJOY MY REMAINING YEARS
—THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT WORRIES ME..
Kainei

GRANDPA?
I CAN REMEMBER IT PERFECTLY, EVEN NOW.
THE ANGEL OF DEATH THAT STOOD NEAR MY FALLEN GRANDFATHER...
.....
YOU'RE ECKBERT...!
THAT DEMON...


I...
I can't seem to.. that is, he isn't...
FINE, I GET IT!
MY GRANDFATHER DIED...
YOUR GRANDFATHER IS RIGHT HERE
...
!
THAT'S A SOUL?
...THAT'S JUST LIKE GRANDPA SAID, TOO.
IT'S MY OWN FAULT FOR TAKING MY EYES OFF OF HIM ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS.
AND I HAD KNOWN...
BOTH THAT IT WOULD SOMEDAY HAPPEN TO HIM... AND THAT IT WAS THE END THAT HE HAD WISHED FOR——
A NIGHT WHEN WITCHES AND GOBLINS FROLIC ABOUT...
UGHH
RUSTLE
NO HELPING IT. THAT'S ENOUGH, FRAN. FOR NOW, ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT...
!
There's no way he'd behave... huh
HAVE YOU SEEN LORD VALAFAR?
IT WAS AS IF HIS BLACK WINGS HAD BURST FROM THE PAGES OF MY FAVORITE PICTURE BOOK...
YOU DO EXIST, ECK!
YOU'RE JUST LIKE GRANDPA SAID.
MICHAEL GARDNER
1986
.....
YOU CAN SEE ME AS I AM NOW...?
IT WAS THE EVE OF MAY, ON WALPURGIS NIGHT——
CHILD
ECK... HEY, WHAT ABOUT GRANDPA? IS HE FOLLOWING US?
AFTER MY GRANDFATHER STOLE OUT OF THE HOUSE,
I FOLLOWED HIM AND FOUND HIM IN A CEMETERY AT THE DARKEST HOUR OF THE NIGHT.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHY I COULD SEE THEM, BUT...
"YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SEE THEM, BUT THERE ARE AS MANY ANGELS AND DEMONS SECRETLY LIVING HERE ON EARTH AS THERE ARE BIRDS IN THE SKY."
—MY GRANDFATHER OFTEN TOLD ME SUCH THINGS.

YOU SWORE YOU'D ONLY VISIT THE HUMAN WORLD IN A HUMAN FORM.
MASTER...! I KNEW IT, THAT FORM...
SURE, I KNOW. I WAS JUST TAKING A LITTLE STROLL IN THE SKY. I got some work done along the way.
GOOD TO SEE YOU, VELTA.
The master brought a child!!
HOW COULD YOU STEAL AWAY A CHILD ...!?
AND TONIGHT, ON A NIGHT WHEN THE VIRTUES' PATROL IS STRICTER THAN EVER!
THAT'S AGAINST THE TREATY!
TAKING A HUMAN CHILD...
MR. CAT!


HEY MISTER, WHICH ONE OF YOU IS THE REAL YOU?
HI, I'M RALPH.
huh?
...!?
Mr. Cat? Is that baby-ish!
...UM, LORD VALAFAR, DON'T TELL ME...
THIS CHILD CAN...
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT SEEMS HE UNINTENTIONALLY SEES THESE THINGS...
INTRIGUING, ISN'T IT?
...ECK?
RALPH, THIS GUY'S TRUE FORM IS THE SAME AS YOURS
He can change into a cat.
...THEN WHAT ABOUT YOU, ECK?
ME?
WELL, I CAN TURN INTO .
BOWN!
YOU TWO SEEM TO BE GETTING ALONG WONDERFULLY.
I never would've thought he was into little boys
LIKE THIS!
The perfect gentleman!

THIS WAY TO THE MASTER'S LIVING ROOM. .
FLARE
THIS CASTLE IS HUGE!
.WHAT'S THAT LIGHT, ECK? IT'S NOT A CANDLE.
It's pretty
IT'S BLUE AND PURPLE
IT'S A HUMAN SOUL
THERE ARE THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS IN THE CELLAR
THEY'RE WHAT REMAINS OF THOSE HUMANS WHO'VE MADE A PACT WITH ME ,AND LIVED OUT THEIR DAYS IN HAPPINESS...

I'VE GRADUALLY LOST INTEREST IN COLLECTING THEIR SOULS
THEY DESIRE WORTHLESS THINGS AND SUMMON US FOR THEM.
EVEN THOUGH THE HUMAN WORLD IS EVOLVING FASTER AND FASTER, FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS HUMANS THEMSELVES HAVE REMAINED MOSTLY UNCHANGED.
I WONDER WHY IT IS...
FOR NOW, I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU DIDN'T WANDER AROUND THE CASTLE.. EH?
MASTER RALPH?
HUH!?
Think what could happen if we don't keep a close eye on him! He's a child!
HUH?
Don't go "huh?" Just where did we lose him! He's gone!!
HAH
DON'T WORRY, YOU GUYS ARE INTERESTING
INSTEAD OF STORING IT AWAY, I'LL USE YOUR GRANDFATHER'S SOUL AS A CANDLE IN THE LIVING ROOM OR SUCHLIKE
GREAT!
<-- Somehow it relies
WAS... MY GRANDPA'S WISH WORTHLESS TOO?

THE TWO OF THEM WANDERED OFF,
A DOOR
IS THIS ECK'S ROOM?
BUT I WASN'T SCARED
WOW
YOUNG AS I WAS, I BECAME ENCHANTED WITH THAT WORLD——
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO WITH THAT CHILD?
HIS LIFE WAS INDIRECTLY PASSED ON TO ME
HE'S HARDLY A MERE HUMAN
DANGER-OUS HOW?
IS HE GOING TO TRANSFORM INTO AN ANGEL AND ATTACK US?
HAHA
YOU SHOULD BRING HIM BACK WHERE YOU FOUND HIM. IT'S DANGEROUS FOR HIM TO BE HERE
NO..
BUT HE'S A MERE HUMAN
INDEED... THAT MAN'S WISH, SEVEN YEARS AGO...

VELTA.
I'M MORE CONCERNED ABOUT MASTER ASTAROTH SEEING HIM. WE DON'T HAVE LONG UNTIL THEN
IT JUST GETS MORE AND MORE INTRIGUING, DOESN'T IT?
AREN'T YOU INTERESTED IN WHAT HAPPENS TO HIM NOW?
WAS FOR THE LIFE OF HIS SON, WHO WAS DYING OF A DISEASE
EVEN THOUGH HE HIMSELF DIDN'T HAVE MUCH LONGER TO LIVE...
DURING HIS REMAINING TIME, HIS THEN NEWLY-WED SON HAD A CHILD
THAT CHILD WAS OUR LITTLE RALPH
THE CHILD WAS NAMED AFTER HIS GRANDFATHER
YOU'VE NO SENSE OF ELEGANCE AT ALL.
How dull.
POOF
FINE,
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING
PLEASE GO LOOK FOR MASTER RALPH ON YOUR OWN!
RUSTLE
SO
YOU RIDE ON YOUR MASTER'S SHOULDERS?
Your personality completely changes when you become a cat.

AH!
ECK, LOOK!
I'VE GOT SO MANY FRIENDS HERE!
My Cat too!
THERE YOU ARE
IT'S SO NICE. AND YOU'RE HERE TOO, ECK!
WHEN I GO HOME, SINCE MY GRANDPA'S GONE, THERE'LL BE NO ONE FOR ME TO TALK TO
I WISH I COULD STAY HERE FOREVER
@ANCO
EVEN OUR UNSOCIABLE COUNT BLIER...!
HMM
...I LIKE HIM! I'LL MAKE HIM MINE.
Don't eat him, Count Blier

CARE TO BET ON THAT, VELTA?
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.
LORD VALA-FAR!
HE'S JUST A CHILD AS HE GROWS OLDER, HE SHOULD BECOME AN ORDINARY HUMAN.
THE WALL OF RACE CANNOT BE OVERCOME, YOU MEAN —?
THAT'S RIGHT!
WILL HE REMAIN AN ORDINARY HUMAN?
OR WILL HE LIVE WITH US FOR ALL ETERNITY?
—AFTER THAT...
I STAYED AT ECKBERT'S CASTLE FOR A LITTLE WHILE (I DON'T REMEMBER HOW MANY DAYS EXACTLY).
I DIDN'T WANT TO GO WHEN IT CAME TIME TO PART, AND HE... OFFERED ME A PACT.
IT WOULD GRANT MY WISH, WITH TWO CONDITIONS ATTACHED...
WELL NOW...
I THINK IT'S WORTH TRYING OUT
AS YOU CAN SEE, HE'S AN EXCEPTIONALLY BRIGHT CHILD.
You'd go that far...
THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF TIME...
...WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO WITH HIM?

I TURNED TWELVE.
RALPH, COME TO THE FRONT!
I'M RETURNING THE CHEMISTRY EXAMS YOU TOOK LAST WEEK.
RALPH BRADLEY TOOK THE HIGHEST SCORE AGAIN.
...YES SIR.
EXCELLENT WORK. GETTING SUCH HIGH MARKS AFTER SKIPPING A GRADE IS REALLY SOMETHING.
Hah
...IT'S ALMOST LIKE MAGIC.
AHHH!
Yes! Even a cupla two grades behind!
THAT'S RIGHT! SO LONG AS YOU LEARN MY LESSONS PROPERLY, YOU TOO WILL RECEIVE THE STAR OF EXCELLENCE!
OF COURSE NOT... IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU'RE SUCH A GREAT TEACHER
Magic, yeah right...
MY WISH WAS TO LIVE WITH ECK IN HIS CASTLE,
AND HE PUT FORTH TWO CONDITIONS. I ACCEPTED THEM,
AND OUR PACT WAS MADE.
SEVERAL YEARS LATER——
QUIET DOWN, BOYS!

GAMIGAMIGAMI
Homework alone won't cut it!
IF SOMEONE YOUNGER THAN YOU CAN DO IT, WHY CAN'T YOU!?
SO WHAT HAPPENED HERE BOYS!? DON'T SLACK OFF
RALPH...
YET AGAIN HE DOES SO WELL THAT EVERYONE'S JEALOUS.
Man
AHH!
ESPECIALLY CRAIG!
YES SIR!
CRAIG BRADLEY!
C'MERE!
You said it!
WHY'S A KID LIKE HIM HAVE TO BE IN OUR CLASS!?
RIGHT!?
CRAIG, YOU DON'T SEEM TO MIND MUCH
MAN!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
AND AGAIN YOU HAVE BELOW AVERAGE MARKS LEARN FROM YOUR LITTLE BROTHER SOME, PLEASE!
What's with the fifty point differences?
Yes sir...
AND THEY FOUND HIM IN A CEMETERY!
HEY, DID YOU KNOW THAT A WHILE BACK RALPH DISAPPEARED FOR SEVEN DAYS?
NO WAY!

Think about it.
SURELY HE MADE A PACT WITH A DEMON BACK THEN, DON'T YOU THINK?
NO WONDER HE'S SO COCKY. IT MAKES YOU WANT TO BELIEVE WHAT THE PROFESSOR SAID ABOUT MAGIC...
I GET IT
REIS!
IS THAT TRUE?
ENOUGH WITH THAT RUMOR!
REIS, THAT'S TOO FAR.
RIGHT, CRAIG?
EVEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FACT THAT YOU AREN'T SIBLINGS BY BLOOD THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU IS JUST TOO MUCH
IF NOT,
TAKE THAT BACK!
Just 'cause you're second-hand Ralph doesn't mean you get to act
twip
AH!
—AND...
SCHOOL'S BORING,
I'M DONE WITH IT.
SOON NOW, ECK.
THE "PROMISED DAY" THAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.
THIS WEEKEND IS WHEN MY GRANDFATHER DIED.

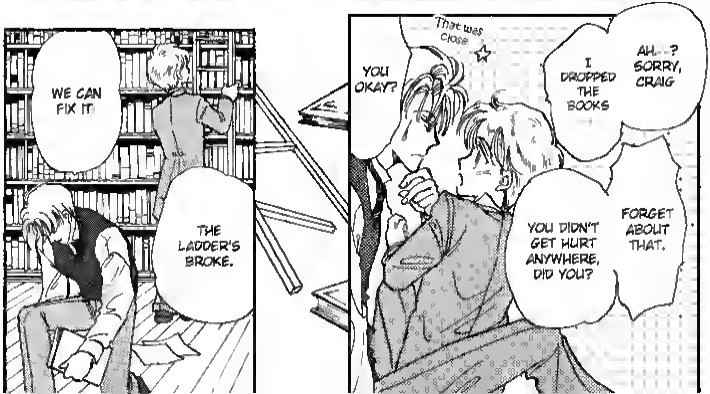
THE FIRST CONDITION THAT ECK SET...
WAS FOR ME TO LIVE A PROPER LIFE IN THE HUMAN WORLD...
BACK THEN—
FLOP
I'M WORN OUT.
SEVEN YEARS IS JUST TOO LONG.
ADULTS AND UPPER-CLASSMEN ARE ALL IDIOTS
It's for nothing to do with me
—BUT THE TIME FOR THAT HAS ALMOST COME TO AN END AS WELL....
IN FOUR DAYS I'LL BE HEADING HOME, AND I'LL GO TO THAT PLACE.
AND THEN ...
MY WISH WILL AT LAST COME TRUE.
smile
THE PROBLEM IS THE SECOND CONDITION.
NO... IT'S TOO LATE FOR SECOND THOUGHTS NOW. I GAVE MY ANSWER A LONG TIME AGO.
Hey!
I HEARD THOSE TWO ARE AT IT AGAIN!
IT COULDN'T BE!
!
IN THE COURTYARD! LET'S GO!
They're going to get in trouble!
Yeah

Professor
Priest
Troublemakers
CRAIG!
CRAIG, ENOUGH! THIS IS BAD...
OH, RALPH?
I KNEW IT...!
Be careful
HEY, STOP IT!
WE'RE GOING HOME SATURDAY, RIGHT? YOU DON'T WANT TO GET OUR PERMISSION FOR THE TRIP REVOKED, DO YOU!?
GOING HAND IN HAND TO VISIT MOMMY? THAT BRAT OF YOURS IS REALLY SPOILED, CRAIG!
WHAT'D YOU SAY!?
Wanna go again?
NO!
AND YOU!
DON'T ACT SO DAMN HIGH AND MIGHTY WHILE CARRYING AROUND A FAIRYTALE BOOK!
AH!
GIVE IT BACK!
TONK
OF ALL PEOPLE ...

Umm...
I HEARD ALL THAT WAS OVER ME...
And you're the only one who didn't see hurr
DON'T FRET ABOUT IT.
IT'S NOT REALLY YOUR FAULT.
THAT'S RIGHT, IT'S YOUR FAULT, CRAIG!
And Professor Abbus too!
WHY'D IT HAVE TO BE A VISITING PRIEST!
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE! WHO EXACTLY STARTED THE FIGHT!?
FORGET IT, LET'S JUST GET THESE DELIVERED.
The library's way off...
WHY'M I GETTING PUNISHED TOO...!
AND IF YOU WANT THE CAUSE. THERE'S REIS TOO.
WHAT!?
I'M THE ONE WHO SURRENDERED! AND BESIDES, I WAS ONLY TELLING THE TRUTH!
TRUTH? THAT WAS ALL SLANDER!
CRAIG
What's
You're also one with the grudge against
I DON'T MIND, I'M USED TO IT...
That kind of stuff...
IT'D KILL ME IF I WORRIED ABOUT IT EACH AND EVERY TIME
HEY...
ASSASSIN SOCIETY 4
the Secret
True K

JUST WHAT DID I DO!?
CONDUCT MYSELF BETTER?
LIKE WHAT SCHOOL MY EXPRESSION AND SUCK UP TO EVERYONE?
YOU'RE ASKING ME THAT? AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO ALWAYS GETS INTO FIGHTS
THAT'S NO BIGGIE FOR ME, I KIND OF LIKE IT
WHY... DON'T YOU CONDUCT YOURSELF MORE PROPERLY?
Since you're so smart.
I'M ONLY DOING WHAT I CAN!
ENOUGH ALREADY!
I DON'T NEED STUFF LIKE THAT FROM YOU TOO!
BAM
Hey!
WATCH OUT!
I GET IT, OKAY!
Geez!
I thought I didn't mean it like that
Don't fall off!
...CRAP, I TOTALLY LOST IT...
wobble
!
BomDom BomDom!!
*Keep it down!
FWP
Yuna Kudo

AND HERE I WAS BEING CAREFUL, SINCE THERE ARE LOTS OF THE "LITTLE FOLK" IN PLACES LIKE THIS.
YOU OKAY?
!
WATCH OUT...
HEY!
AH!
THERE'S ONE IN THERE, TOO...!
SORRY I WASN'T TRYING TO BE MEAN...
RALPH?
HE WAS JUST HAVING FUN, AND I ACCIDENTALLY...
HEY!
OH!
PAT
WHAT'S WRONG?
EVERYONE DOESN'T THINK THAT WAY, OKAY!?
What are you staring at!?


That was close
YOU OKAY?
I DROPPED THE BOOKS
AH...? SORRY, CRAIG
FORGET ABOUT THAT.
YOU DIDN'T GET HURT ANYWHERE, DID YOU?
WE CAN FIX IT
THE LADDER'S BROKE.

YOU CAN PICK UP BOOKS AGAIN.
BUT...
.....
BE CAREFUL, WILL YOU? YOU'RE JUST ACCIDENT-PRONE
AS YOUR LESS-FORTUNATE OLDER BROTHER, I'VE DECIDED TO PROTECT WHAT YOU'VE WORKED SO HARD FOR.
ONCE HUMANS BREAK, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.
BREAK... DIE.
AM I BEING ANNOYING?
UM, WELL...
OF COURSE NOT...
I NEED YOU.
I TAKE BACK WHAT I JUST SAID.
IT'S OK, DON'T OVERDO IT.
Kinda awkward
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, THIS THING WAS MY FAULT.
What happened? I heard a huge crash!
We're fine!
HEY, RALPH... TRUTH IS, I DON'T REALLY GET THIS WHOLE BROTHER THING.
It's always just been my dad and I.
...SAME HERE.
YOU CAN'T FORCE PEOPLE TO CALL THEMSELVES BROTHERS...
...RIGHT!?
ah-aha-ha
You're kind of creepy
WH... WHAT!?

TWITCH
TWITCH
Ralphy ♡
?
?
SO! JUST HOW LONG'S A GOOD KID LIKE YOU GOING TO STAY AWAY FROM HOME?
CR. CRAIG?
BE HONEST WITH YOUR BROTHER HERE
EH!?
ER, WELL...
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO JUST TELL YOU!
WHEN WE GO HOME YOU'LL SEE FOR YOURSELF
EH?
YEAH, THEY'RE GOING TO FORGET YOU! YOU'RE MAKING MOM CRY.
ON THE RARE OCCASION WE DO GET TIME OFF, ALL YOU DO IS STAY AT SCHOOL AND STUDY
I'VE DECIDED, COME NEXT WEEK, YOU AND I ARE GOING TO SIT DOWN AND HAVE A BROTHERLY HEART TO HEART.
GET READY FOR IT!
MUSS
CRAIG ...
—IS THAT...
WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT?
...I'M SORRY, BUT I CAN'T GIVE YOU THAT.

BUT, YOU KNOW, THAT'S WHY...
...NO,
IT'S NOTHING
WHAT IS IT?
...AT LEAST UNTIL THEN, WE CAN...
JUST TALKING TO MYSELF
FLUTTER
I'VE A DREAM I WANT TO COME TRUE, NO MATTER WHAT.
RALPH...
TO GO, ONCE MORE, TO HIS CASTLE...
THAT'S WHEN THE TWO OF US ARE GOING TO GO OFF, TOGETHER...
I'M SORRY, CRAIG...
I HAVE TO GO.
YOU'RE A NICE GUY, BUT...
BUT...
NEXT WEEK THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY TIME FOR THE TWO OF US.
SORRY

HEY!
hwOO
12 years old
... I FEEL KINDA DEAD.
CAN'T MUSTER THE ENERGY TO WALK.
start
CRAIG, WE'RE FINE! THAT RUNT CAN'T PLAY!
THEN WE'VE GOTTA TEACH HIM, RIGHT?
C'MON, RALPH!
UMM
YOU LOOK FREE! WANNA JOIN IN?
IT'S OKAY, I'LL PASS
I'M NOT FEELING SO GREAT
FUMP
HAH!
I WONDER
THIS IS WHERE I ALWAYS SIT
You nuisance
LIKE HELL!
WHAT ARE YOU, A STALKER?
You were watching?
THERE YOU ARE AGAIN!
HMPH.
YOU SHOULD BOTHER HIM LESS YOURSELF, YOU KNOW
JILTED AGAIN?
Better not if you're sick
REALLY?

HE SEEMS LIKE A HIGHLY-STRUNG CHILD. HE'S ONLY TIRED.
OH...
HE'S MERELY STRESSED
RALPH!
HE DOESN'T HAVE A FEVER, AND HIS BREATHING IS NORMAL.
ANYTHING ELSE?
SO HE ISN'T SICK!?
HMPH!
ANYWAY, HE SHOULD BE FINE AFTER RESTING FOR 2 TO 3 DAYS IN A QUIET PLACE.
WELL SORRY!
THIS SCHOOL IS LIKE A ZOO.
Old geezer!
You rowdy kids!
SLAM
I'M FINE I CAN GET BACK TO CLASS
SORRY FOR CAUSING TROUBLE
CRAIG
DON'T OVERDO IT.

TODAY'S FRIDAY...
STRESS, OF ALL THINGS!
FROM PUSHING TOO FAR..
HE IS JUST A KID, AFTER ALL..
WE'RE KIND OF RESPONSIBLE, TOO..
Really
Are we the only ones?
CRAIG?
..REIS?
..COME WITH ME.
DON'T TELL ME I'M SPENDING MY LAST DAY STUCK IN BED AT THE INFIRMARY...
One more day..
—!
FWISH
clack

...IT'S BEEN SOME TIME, MASTER RALPH.
tap
VELTA ...!?
IS THAT REALLY YOU, VELTA!?
hehe
BUT WHY... TOMORROW'S THE DAY WE SAID
OR WAIT, DID I MAKE A MISTAKE!?
NO...
YOUR AFFAIRS HAVE PROGRESSED MORE THAN EXPECTED, SO THE MASTER WAS WORRIED...
AFFAIRS?
ECK'S WORRIED? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

HEY, VELTA ...!
MASTER RALPH,
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS HUMAN WORLD?
EH?
WHETHER OR NOT, IN THE SEVEN YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED, SOMEONE'S BECOME SO IMPORTANT TO ME THAT I DON'T WANT TO BE SEPARATED FROM THEM...
...IS THAT WHAT YOU'VE COME TO FIND OUT?
...I DON'T NEED IT
Oh? IS THAT SO?
THAT BROTHER OF YOURS SEEMS REALLY ATTACHED TO YOU.
CRAIG, YEAH
HE'S LOOKED OUT FOR ME A LOT, BUT THAT'S NOT BECAUSE OF ME PERSONALLY.
NOW MAKE FRIENDS, CRAIG...
HE'S JUST A NICE GUY.
TO HIM, I REALLY AM HIS YOUNGER BROTHER.

ECK'S BEEN THE ONLY ONE I CARED ABOUT.
IT'S A LITTLE LATE NOW, VELTA.
EVER SINCE WE MET 7 YEARS AGO,
HE SEES ME FOR WHO I REALLY AM!
..REALLY?
TO BE HONEST, I WANT TO SEE HIM RIGHT AWAY
IN ANY CASE,
I MIGHT HAVE HESITATED A LITTLE,
BUT I'VE MADE UP MY MIND
I DON'T WANT TO KEEP UP THE PRETENSE OF HAVING THE "PERFECT FAMILY" ANYMORE.
WELL THEN,
Smile
EH?
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO "RIGHT AWAY"?
RIGHT NOW !?
YES
HOW
MASTER RALPH
IT'S JUST
AND TOMORROW WOULD WORK JUST AS WELL.
YOU'VE NO OBLIGATION TO COME RIGHT NOW,
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I WANTED TO STAY HERE LIKE THIS UNTIL TOMORROW.
JUST WHAT?

Walpurgis nacht
WE COULD HAVE SO MUCH MORE FUN TONIGHT!
Tomorrow on Walpurgis eve, the angels will be patrolling
Well
WHAT DO YOU THINK? I MEANT EVERY-THING I SAID.
THAT ASIDE
I'LL...
STAY HERE ONE MORE DAY.
TELL ECK...
THAT I'LL SEE HIM TOMOR-ROW.
AS YOU WISH
YO!
YOU UP YET!?
WHAT HAP-PENED?

IT ALMOST SEEMED LIKE SOMEONE WAS JUST HERE...?
EH?
YOUR FACE!
DID I IMAGINE IT?
Oh
REIS AND I...
FORGET IT. HOW'RE YOU...
AHA!
YOU'RE AMAZING!
Mom's going to give me hell.
YOU'RE HONESTLY GOING TO GO HOME WITH YOUR FACE LOOKING LIKE THAT? I DON'T BELIEVE YOU!
THANK GOD, RALPH... YOU'RE BACK TO YOUR USUAL SELF.
I WON'T SAY A THING THERE, I SWEAR
DON'T YOU DARE TELL HER THAT ALL I DO IS FIGHT. YOU HEAR!
YOU'RE SO KIND, CRAIG DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT AND SMILE...
I DON'T WANT TO HESITATE ANYMORE...
—TOMORROW, AFTER SEVEN YEARS, MY DREAM WILL COME TRUE. FOR THAT, THERE ARE TWO CONDITIONS.
I'M SORRY, CRAIG.
I NEED YOU...

...BUT HE HIMSELF STILL HASN'T REALIZED IT, HM?
MOST LIKELY NOT...
...I DON'T THINK IT WAS A MISTAKE, HOWEVER...
THAT IS THE FATE I OFFERED HIM.
EVERY-THING WILL BE SETTLED TOMORROW NIGHT.
—— I DO HOPE...
THAT HE WILL STILL ACCEPT...
WELL, NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT NOW.
REALLY...?
CHAPTER 1 END

Vartrag Tale

Makoto Oki

scans:
LadyNagisa
translation:
Delilaryn
edit:
Voo

www.stormInheaven.org

ECKBERT——
SEVEN YEARS AGO, A HUMAN CHILD CALLED ME THUS...
ECK!
HEY, ECK!
HEHE
AND I ALLOWED HIM TO.
ECK IS IT?
CALLING ME
I BET HE'S STILL CALLING ME THAT
LORD VALAFAR?

Valafar
dukes d'enfar
I'VE BEEN WAITING.
WILL HE END UP AS AN ORDINARY HUMAN?
OR...
WILL HE LIVE WITH US FOR ALL ETERNITY...?
THE CHOICE IS YOURS ALONE, RALPH
VAMPIRE TALE
CHAPTER 2

Vartrag Tale〈Valafar〉

YOU TOO, FRAN!
IS THAT WHY YOU CALL THE MASTER "ECK"?
MGH
BUT THAT'S
HEY, IT'S ECK, ISN'T IT?
fwip
Here!
MR. CAT, LOOKIE HERE!
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S AN "ANGEL" THE BLACK-HAIRED, BLACK-WINGED "ECKBERT".
IT SEEMS HIS GRANDFATHER GAVE HIM THAT BOOK THE NIGHT BEFORE HE DIED
So yesterday
REALLY,
WHAT WAS THAT OLD MAN TEACHING HIS GRANDSON?
He'd certainly weren't you in Cat form, Velta?
DON'T BE DIFFICULT.
HUFF
MASTER,
WE CAN'T MAKE A PACT WITH A CHILD WHO CAN'T EVEN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ANGELS AND US DEMONS.
A helpless child? Please. It would be suicide.

I KNOW
RALPH
Come here
LORD VALA-FAR!
lift
NOW, THE ECKBERT IN YOUR BOOK THERE, DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE IS?
AN ANGEL
Yeah
ECK IS ECK.
AND I RESEMBLE HIM, YES?
...THEN, RALPH, WHAT IS IT YOU THINK I AM?
FLAT OUT
...NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
That's exactly right, but then...
AM I WRONG?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF AN ANGEL WITH HORNS.
A DEMON, OF COURSE.
?
YOU'VE MET AN ANGEL?
THEY HAVE HALOS AND BIG WHITE WINGS... RIGHT?
THEY CARRY SWORDS AND GLARE AT YOU.
AND I DON'T LIKE REAL ANGELS! THEY'RE ALL MEAN AND NASTY.
RALPH
You know...
FWA FWA
Don't laugh Fran
THAT WOULD BE ALL A FIVE YEAR OLD WOULD KNOW.

IT'S A LIE THAT ANGELS ARE NICE.
THEY DON'T EVEN LOOK AT YOU WHEN YOU SAY HELLO... EVEN THOUGH THEY SEE ME.
I haven't done anything bad!
VIRTUES, I'M SURE.
PROBABLY.
Weak to irregulars who seem true at heart.
True to the pact.
AND, AND
I LIKE THE GOBLINS AT MY HOUSE BETTER THAN ANGELS TOO THEY DON'T ANSWER ME. BUT THEY DON'T GET ANGRY AND RUN OFF. SO I LIKE THEM BETTER THAN ANGELS
AND I HEARD THAT DEMONS ARE NICE TO PEOPLE DEPENDING ON HOW PEOPLE TREAT THEM AND...
"A HUNGRY NATION NEEDS BREAD MORE THAN SCRIPTURE", RIGHT?
SO THAT'S WHAT YOUR GRANDFATHER TOLD YOU?
YEAH!
I remembered it!
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
MY, MY...
BUT, BUT...
I THINK SO TOO!
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO REALLY TALKED TO ME WHEN YOU FOUND ME, ECK...
HEY ECK, DOES WHAT YOU DO "DEPEND ON HOW PEOPLE TREAT YOU"?
SO WHAT NOW?
. CAN I STAY HERE?
RALPH.

I WANNA STAY WITH YOU, ECK
I'LL FOLLOW YOUR RULES...
HEY... CAN I STAY HERE?
SQUEEZE
AFTER HE'S SAID ALL THAT, IS THERE EVEN A PROBLEM ANYMORE?
What kind of demon turns down an opportunity like this?
TRUE... BUT SOMETHING BOTHERS ME
PERHAPS WE REALLY SHOULD SEND HIM BACK SOON...
SHALL I KEEP HIM HERE IN THE CASTLE, LIKE THIS...?
YOU'RE THINKING TOO MUCH, VELTA.
IT'S NOT A BAD THING TO TOUCH SOMETHING THIS PURE ON OCCASION
I guess you can call me whatever you'd like
ECK?
——BUT...
IN THE END, I COULDN'T DO IT.
PERHAPS, BACK THEN...

IT'S ALL HIS FAULT
IF VALAFAR HADN'T TAKEN AN INTEREST IN THAT CHILD, NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.
PHOAR
NOW IT'S TOO LATE...
LORD ASTAROTH
EXACTLY.
WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I'D ADVISED HIM MORE FIRMLY...?
OR AT LEAST REALIZED IT SOONER
MAYBE WE'D HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND A BETTER WAY
CLOSE
AHH, HOLD IT. LET ME BRING ABOUT MY CORPOREAL FORM
Also I'd like you to stop calling me by that self name
Swirl
THANK YOU ONCE MORE FOR YOUR HELP BEFORE
I HOPE YOU'RE DOING WELL, LORD ASTAROTH...
BOW
I'M SORRY
I HADN'T REALIZED YOU WERE HERE...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, VELTA YOU'VE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

There we are
YOU'RE AS FORMAL AS EVER, VELTA.
...HOWEVER, AREN'T YOU LOOKING RATHER GLUM?
EVER SINCE I BEGAN SERVING HIM, MY ONLY DESIRE HAS BEEN HIS HAPPINESS.
MY MASTER'S WORRIES AND TROUBLES ARE MINE AS WELL.
I BELIEVE THAT NIPPING HIS WORRIES IN THE BUD IS ALSO MY DUTY.
Please continue to support us!
I AM QUITE AWARE OF YOUR DEVOTION TO YOUR MASTER.
HOWEVER, VALA MAY OR MAY NOT BE AWARE OF IT.
THE SAME GOES FOR THAT DIRK.
YOU SHOULD BE WELL AWARE, LORD ASTAROTH.
What a waste of such an adorable face
THOUGH, WORKING FOR HIM, YOU'D HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE...
OH NO, OF COURSE NOT!
Can?
GRIN
...VELT.

OH, YES... IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE LORD ASTAROTH, WHO KNOWS WHETHER OR NOT WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACQUIRE THAT DIRK...
IT'S FINE. DROP IT.
HIS PROSPENSITY TO ASK THE IMPOSSIBLE OF ME IS HARDLY SOMETHING NEW
SORRY!
WHAT I DON'T LIKE IS THAT HE TRIED OUT THAT DIRK ON YOU, VELTA.
THAT DIRK...
THE CENTURIES-OLD SEAL ON THE ONCE-INVALUABLE AZURE DEMON BLADE HAS BEEN BROKEN.
...THOUGH JUST HOW MUCH THAT MAGIC WORKS...
...BUT IT WAS DONE PROPERLY.
SQUEEZE
I'LL BE BLUNT. I CONSIDERED ENDING OUR FRIENDSHIP THIS TIME
I've said it before but!
AND! CRAMMING A HALF-CENTURY LONG PROCESS INTO SEVEN YEARS...
IF I'D CHEATED YOU, YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE RIGHT NOW
WELL...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
I had a narrow escape

...BUT THAT DIRK IS THE SUBERB ARTICLE THAT THE MASTER DESIRED.
THANKS TO YOU, IT SEEMS THAT IT WILL PROCEED SMOOTHLY.
THE AZURE DIRK...
A RATHER TROUBLESOME DEMONIC BLADE THAT TAKES THE SOUL OF THE ONE WHO IS STABBED INTO THE ONE WHO STABBED...
I NEVER IMAGINED A WEAPON OF LEGEND SUCH AS THIS WOULD FALL INTO OUR HANDS...
THOUGH EVEN I THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT THAT I HAD DIED WHEN I HAD IT STICKING OUT OF MY CHEST...
LIKE YOU'D DIE WHEN YOU COULD JUST SWITCH BACK TO CAT FORM...
We made quite the find
BUT STILL
...YOU'VE BECOME QUITE TOUGH
YOU WERE SUCH A CRYBABY JUST A WHILE AGO
REALLY? I'M NOT TOO SURE
I GUESS YOU REALLY ARE DIFFERENT IF EVEN ONLY A QUARTER OF YOUR BLOOD IS HUMAN
MAYBE

YOU'RE SO GOOD, VELTA.
THA— THANK YOU
AND THIS HAIRSTYLE I RECOMMENDED REALLY DOES LOOK LOVELY ON YOU
EVEN IF VALA DOESN'T UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS... I CERTAINLY DO
DON'T BE AFRAID TO TELL ME IF ANYTHING HAPPENS
I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED AFTER YOU, AND I'LL CONTINUE TO DO SO
BOU
pa-pa-pa-
Pardon me!
...THERE'S NO NEED TO RUN AWAY, NOW, IS THERE?
You really are such a sniff
ASTIN, DON'T TEASE VELTA.
VALA-FAR. How could you even think it?
There there
AND THIS IS THE HUMAN WORLD
NO MATTER HOW SIMILAR TO BACK HOME IT IS INSIDE THE CASTLE I CAN'T SAY I APPRECIATE YOUR CURRENT APPEARANCE
I DON'T APPRECIATE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN PLACES WHERE YOU CAN'T EVEN STRETCH YOUR WINGS PROPERLY, EITHER.
Hah
Flap Flap

LORD ASTAROTH
EXCUSE ME...
Oh! he snatched back.
I. WHAT CAN I SAY, I'M DREADFULLY INEXPERIENCED... I WELL.
I'm bad at this!
I AM VERY SORRY. PLEASE DO NOT BE OFFENDED...
BOW
No, that's uh!
THERE'S NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE, VELTA.
WHY'D YOU COME, ASTAROTH?
I JUST THOUGHT THAT YOU WOULD NOT WANT TO BE LATE AGAIN.
Heh heh
DON'T WORRY, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF GETTING IN YOUR WAY

MASTER RALPH...
YOU'VE GROWN QUITE A BIT.
SO YOU UNDERSTAND AT LEAST A BIT, DON'T YOU? THE MEANING IMPLIED IN THOSE CONDITIONS..!
LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE THE MOON TONIGHT.
THOSE UNCHANGING, EARNEST EYES...
ARE THE SAME AS THEY WERE SEVEN YEARS AGO...
I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT HIM WITH ME YESTERDAY.
Though it's against the rules
IF I HAD, THEN AT LEAST THAT BOY...
THE FIRST CONDITION IS THAT I WAIT UNTIL THE PROMISED DAY WHEN I'M TWELVE YEARS OLD
I'll do my best!
AND THE SECOND ONE—
YEP! I CAN TELL YOU THEM, ECK!
THERE ARE TWO CONDITIONS—REMEMBER?

HEY, ECK... DO YOU THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO FIND...
THE SECOND ONE...
...THEN I HAVE TO BRING WITH ME...
CLUNK
CLUNK
ECK..
RALPH?
Hey!
WE'RE HERE
...
CLUNK
CLUNK
HEY, WAKE UP...
pat pat
NO, I'LL PASS
Thanks
ha ha ha
Though we're headed somewhere else
WANT TO STAY ON A LITTLE LONGER?
WHAT, DID THE KID FALL ASLEEP?

THIS WEEKEND... IS THE ANNIVERSARY OF GRANDPA'S DEATH.
WHAT, HAS IT BEEN SO LONG THAT YOU'VE GOTTEN NERVOUS?
No helping it?
Hmph, no way I was snoring.
YEAH— I DIDN'T SLEEP WELL LAST NIGHT...
You were snoring
YOU WERE REALLY FAST ASLEEP
A LOT HAPPENED, BUT IN ANY CASE, WE SET OFF ON OUR WAY HOME.
HUH?
HEY
DO YOU ALWAYS GO HOME DOING STUFF LIKE THAT?
IT TAKES AN HOUR ON THE TRAIN AND AN HOUR OF WALKING TO GET HOME FROM SCHOOL...
HEY, CRAIG
I SEE HIM ON THE ROAD WHEN I COME HOME EVERY OTHER SATURDAY, SO HE LETS ME RIDE
WELL, I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY I'VE BEEN GETTING TO KNOW HIM.
IT DID MAKE GETTING HERE A LOT EASIER, BUT...
IS THE MAN WHO LET US RIDE IN HIS WAGON SOMEONE YOU KNOW?
Adults can drive but not us
We only have to walk half as much

I WONDER IF THE OLD ME COULD DO IT...
YOU REALLY BECOME FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE, DON'T YOU?
BACK WHEN GRANDPA WAS STILL ALIVE...
I CAN'T DO IT AT ALL
RALPH!
LET'S MAKE A LITTLE STOP BEFORE WE GO HOME
WHAT?
The blue-bells should be blooming now.
JUST TO GET A PRESENT FOR MOM!
I HAVEN'T BEEN IN THE WOODS FOR A WHILE
DO YOU COME HERE OFTEN, CRAIG?
I HAVEN'T IN A WHILE
BUT BACK WHEN I FIRST MOVED OVER HERE, I TOOK WALKS THROUGH HERE ALL THE TIME
IT WAS ONLY ME AND MY FATHER FOR A LONG TIME.

HUH? I COULD'VE SWORN IT WAS SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE
CRAIG, IS THIS IT?
SO I GOT PRETTY GOOD AT GETTING ON EVERYONE'S GOOD SIDE
...CRAIG?
BUT THAT SAME FATHER TRAVELLED ALL OVER THE PLACE AS SOON AS I WAS LEFT TO HIM.
I NEVER HAD A PLACE I COULD CALL HOME UNTIL HE MARRIED YOUR MOTHER.
It was tough
Ooh!
THAT'S IT!
GOOD JOB, RALPH. YOUR TWELVE YEARS OF LIFE HAVEN'T BEEN FOR NOTHING, I SEE ♪♪
Do you always carry that around?
Huh
Heh heh a man always should!
AND SHE HAS LOTS OF BLUE DRESSES AND CURTAINS
YEAH.
DID YOU KNOW?
MOM SAID THIS IS HER FAVORITE COLOR.

It may be a shock at first, but you learn to really get along
THE IMPORTANT THING IS HOW YOU WANT THINGS TO BE, RIGHT?
WELL, THAT'S JUST HOW I DO THINGS
BUT RALPH, YOU...
I WAS TALKING ABOUT STAYING ON EVERYONE'S GOOD SIDE BEFORE, BUT IT ALSO MEANS THAT COMPROMISE IS NECESSARY TO GET ALONG WITH SOMEONE.
BUT DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME.
...A LITTLE, AT FIRST.
...HE REALLY KEEPS AN EYE OUT.
...IS THAT PART OF WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE?
AT THE VERY LEAST, I WANT TO HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU AND MY FAMILY.
SO WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF, THEN?
STEP
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
I'VE ALWAYS SENSED IT.
YOU'RE NEVER THINKING OF ANYTHING.
BUT YOU DON'T, DO YOU?
IF YOU LIKE BEING ALONE, THAT'S FINE...
THEN WHY...?
PLEASE, ANSWER ME.
CRAIG
YOU'RE ALWAYS ALONE
SO I WANT TO TAKE THIS CHANCE TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.
NOT A SINGLE THING ABOUT ME... ABOUT ANY OF US AROUND YOU...

YOU'RE WORKING VERY HARD, LOUISE
rustle
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T MOVE ABOUT SO MUCH
AT ANY RATE, YOU.
OH, DARLING
That ole' iris now isn't it?
I'M FINE! AFTER ALL...
I was just changing the bed covers
RALPH
DOESN'T COME HOME OFTEN AT ALL, DOES HE... IT MUST BE THAT
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE THE TWO OF THEM HAVE COME HOME TOGETHER...
RALPH. WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

RALPH...
YOU'LL BE A BIG BROTHER SOON.
THAT'S WHY... YOU KNOW?
I CAN FINALLY TELL RALPH ABOUT OUR NEW FAMILY..
BE-CAUSE
WE'RE STILL HERE. HOW LONG IS HE GOING TO GO ON ABOUT "GRANDPA, GRANDPA!"...
That child
IT'S FINE! THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT.
MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE CLEANED OUT HIS GRAND-FATHER'S ROOM...
Ahh...
I WONDER IF THAT WILD IMAGINATION OF HIS HAS SETTLED DOWN ANY SINCE HE WENT TO SCHOOL...
AND CRAIG'S SUCH A GOOD BOY THAT HE NEVER SAYS ANYTHING THAT WOULD WORRY ME...
I am worried!
Come, now
I'M SURE IT'S FINE HE'S A BRIGHT BOY...
AH, WON'T THEY HURRY HOME?
EVEN THOUGH HE SKIPPED A YEAR, HE'S PUSHED ASIDE THE OTHER BOYS AND GOTTEN TOP GRADES IT'S VERY IMPRESSIVE
YES...
YES, I SUPPOSE SO!
Though there's no helping the fools in our family
THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT...
Heh heh...
YOU SURE RECOVER FAST, DON'T YOU?

It's coming!
PUNKS
What's up with that, anyway? You mean he won't fight if Craig's not here?!
HMPH!
Slam
WHAT'S UP WITH REIS?
He's holing up inside and sulking!!
WELL, YOU KNOW RALPH JUST SNATCHED FIRST PLACE FROM HIM.
STALK STALK
AN UNUSUAL BLACK FEATHER I PICKED UP AT THE LIBRARY...
What bird is it from? Never seen one like this
CRAIG'S OR RALPH'S..?
I wonder whose it is
BUT REALLY...
I GUESS GUYS LIKE HIM REALLY DO EXIST.
DON'T GO PROVOKING RALPH ANYMORE.
I'M THE ONE WHO HAS SOMETHING TO SAY, REIS.
HE'S SO SIMPLE MINDED THAT ANYTHING WILL SET HIM OFF.
...WELL, IT COULDN'T BE CRAIG'S.
I MISSED THE CHANCE TO GIVE IT BACK YESTERDAY.
Feels nice
Maybe I'll just keep it.

And what'd you mean "brothers in-law"? Pick your words better, you moron!
IDIOT... YOU'RE THE ONE DOING THE PROVOKING.
—— HE YELLED AT ME BEFORE I COULD SAY A WORD, AND I LOST ALL DESIRE TO TALK TO HIM.
I'M STAKING IT ALL ON THIS WEEKEND, SO KEEP YOUR NOSE OUT OF IT.
RIGHT NOW IS THE CRUCIAL MOMENT FOR US TO TURN FROM BROTHERS-IN-LAW TO REAL BROTHERS.
I GUESS THIS FEATHER SHALL BE A TROPHY OF WAR.
...IF YOU'RE GONNA GO THAT FAR, THEN COME BACK WITH GOOD RESULTS.
BEING BROTHERS ISN'T ALL FUN AND GAMES... I WANTED TO SEE YOU LOSE HEART, CRAIG
CRAIG.
JUST YOU TRY TO BETRAY MY EXPECTATIONS...
—YOU TALK FINE TO THAT PICTURE BOOK AND THAT FEATHER OF YOURS—

WHY NOW OF ALL TIMES...
DO YOU REALLY TRUST US SO LITTLE?
CRAIG?
EH...?
STOP COWERING IN FEAR AND PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE FOR ONCE!
WHY WON'T YOU APPROACH US, FOR ONCE...?
IT'S ALL RIGHT!
YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO DO THAT NOW, DON'T YOU THINK?!
DON'T SAY THAT SO DETERMINEDLY!!
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!!
...PUT MYSELF OUT THERE?
IF I HAD, I WOULD HAVE BEEN ALL ALONE.
SEE? YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME
THAT'S WHY...
I MADE A PACT WITH A DEMON SEVEN YEARS AGO!
I DON'T NEED IT!
NO ONE BELIEVES ME!
YOU WON'T NEED IT EITHER.
RALPH!
I BELIEVE IN YOU

FWOOSH
RALPH ...?
!

RALPH?
WHAT'S WRONG?
HEY! RALPH!
HUH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU JUST SAW A GHOST... ARE YOU OKAY?
PAT
SORRY.
DON'T TOUCH ME!
SLAP
I GUESS I SAID TOO MUCH, TOO
WAS I SEEING THINGS...?
.....

BEING NICE TO SOMEONE LIKE ME...
DO YOU KNOW? I'M...
.....
...YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT, CRAIG
...RALPH?
YOUR GOD OF DEATH!
I...
I DON'T WANT YOU TO APOLOGIZE!
WHAT, ARE YOU GOING TO GET ON MY GOOD SIDE, TOO?
I HATE YOU!!

CRAIG...
I'M SURE I HURT YOU... BUT...
YOU CAN'T GO SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT TO YOUR FRIENDS!
WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO?
!
YOU! WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO?!
Ah!
What're you so upset about? Weird
It was a shock!
WORRY ALL YOU WANT, BUT THE RESULT WILL STILL BE THE SAME.
Do you have a death wish?
TO BE SO RUDE ON THIS MOST IMPORTANT DAY, THE PROMISED DAY. .
SHUT UP!
What do you mean!
SEVEN YEARS HAVE PASSED TO REACH TODAY. THE CONDITION IS JUST TO BRING A FRIEND WITH YOU.
DON'T THINK ABOUT ANYTHING UNNECESSARY, NOW
fwip
DON'T FORGET.
See ya!

Shut up!
DON'T COME HERE AGAIN! OF COURSE I WON'T FORGET!
And besides, whose fault do you think it is?!
Stupid!
THAT'S RIGHT... I WAITED A WHOLE SEVEN YEARS... HOW MUCH I'VE DREAMED ABOUT IT...
AND I'M NOT A FIVE-YEAR-OLD KID, EITHER!
...
I KNOW IT'S TO SHOW THE PACT I MADE WITH ECK.
AND...
I HAVE TO CATCH UP TO CRAIG.
AND WHEN I DO...
I'LL BECOME SOMETHING NOT HUMAN.
INDEED, I'LL BECOME A DEMON...
I FOUND SOMETHING RATHER UNNATURAL
I CAN'T JUST IGNORE IT, NOW, CAN I...
CRUNCH

"BUT THAT'S WHY I CAN'T LEAVE HIM BE..."
I don't know
HE'S SUCH A DIFFICULT KID...
HE LOOKED LIKE HE WAS ABOUT TO CRY.
"I HATE YOU" ...IS IT?
OH, MAN.
THAT REALLY HURT
BUT...
Can an only child say that?
THAT'S HOW ALL OLDER BROTHERS ARE.
Like you
flop
flop
I GOT THIS AND THEN HE DISAPPEARED.
MAYBE HE REALLY WAS A GHOST OR SOMETHING...
Success!
HELLO
...BUT NOW HE IS HERE.
And you are...?
I'M SURE...
Ha ha ha
I can see him right there.
...WHEN DID HE GET HERE?!
THAT OLD MAN WASN'T HERE JUST A MOMENT AGO!
I'M SURE OF IT!
...

Heeey!
Who cares how it turns out...
...THAT'S IT, I'M GOING HOME WITH RALPH
.....
...SOMETHING'S STRANGE TODAY.
ABOUT THIS FOREST, ABOUT ME, AND ABOUT RALPH, TOO...
WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S ALL OF THIS ONE-SIDED...
HOW VERY ODD. WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, LOST ONE?
!
I REMEMBER! YOU'RE
A VIRTUES
THE ONE WHO, BACK THEN, DIDN'T SEE ME... BUT WHY?
COME
GRAB
!
NO!
LET GO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
RALPH ?!
.....
...WE'RE NOT GETTING ANYWHERE LIKE THIS.

WINGS AND A HALO...
WAIT, ISN'T THAT-
WHAT THEY CALL AN ANGEL...?
An
Angel!
GLARE
DASH
RA...
NO!
GASP
Agh! Darn it!
!?
LET GO OF HIM!!
ARE YOU TRYING TO GET IN MY WAY?!
You can see him!
CRAIG!

DAMN IT... HE'S SO STRONG...!
He really isn't human
!
WHAM
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO SNATCH AWAY MY BROTHER?!
Don't screw around!
OUT OF THE WAY!
I HAVE NO BUSINESS WITH HUMANS!
Ghg!
CRAIG!
!
NO...
WHERE IS HE GOING TO TAKE ME?!
NOT THERE...
DRAG
NO...!
...ME...
rustle
NOT THERE...!

I'M SUPPOSED TO GO...!
Eck!
HELP ME!
ECK...
RUSTLE

WHAT?! JUST WHO ARE YOU...
Ugh!
Fwoosh
...I BEG YOUR PARDON
BUT THAT BOY HAS A PACT WITH US...
ECKBERT...!!
IT'S BEEN FAR TOO LONG, RALPH.

MY DREAM...
I WANT... TO BE WITH HIM AGAIN!
THAT IS MY DREAM... THE ONE THING I HAVE WISHED FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS!
ECK...?
NO WAY
HEHE
IS IT REALLY ECK?
WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT YOURSELF IF IT'S TRUE, RALPH?
IF IT'S A DREAM, PLEASE, DON'T LET ME WAKE UP...
COME NOW.
IF IT'S A DREAM...

Vartrag Tale
Mamiya Oki
scanned & cleaned:
Buntacular
translation:
Delilaryn
edit:
Tanzi
www.stormInheaven.org

IT'S NOT A DREAM. IT'S MY ECK!
I'VE ALWAYS... ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE YOU,
ECK.
AT THE TIME...
I DIDN'T KNOW ANY-THING.
rumple
HOW YOU'VE GROWN, RALPH.
I'M GLAD TO SEE... THAT YOU'VE BEEN WELL.
ECK...
VARTRAG TALE
CHAPTER 3

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT MEANING ECK'S WORDS HELD.
I WAS JUST SO HAPPY....
ECK...
YOU WERE SO COOL WHEN YOU SHOWED YOUR WINGS JUST NOW.
I THOUGHT THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT ANYMORE...
I LET MY GUARD DOWN.
RALPH.
I WANT TO GRANT YOUR WISH, WHATEVER IT MAY BE, BUT RIGHT NOW...
THAT'S RIGHT!
What are you doing?!
How annoying you are.
I ALREADY SAID THAT WE HAVE A PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH HIM, DIDN'T I?
AND IF CONDITIONS ARE THE ISSUE, THEN WHAT ABOUT YOU?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE CONDITIONS, YOU DEMON!
LET GO OF HIM AND LEAVE THIS PLA....
TAG
Wha-
WHAT?! THAT WAS....
Such strength let go!
If you say something odd, my hand just might slip
YOU ATTACKED A COMPLETELY INNOCENT HUMAN. HOW CAN YOU TALK?
STOP!
STEP

I AM EL'S MESSENGER.
WHA—
I WOULD RATHER KEEP THE DISTURBANCE TODAY TO A MINIMUM.
IN ANY CASE, PLEASE, PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPON. . IF YOU DO, THEN WHAT FOLLOWS WILL BE NO CONCERN OF HEAVEN'S
"EL?" OH, MASTER'S....
SLIDE
THEN HE'S TOBIA, IS HE...
!
WHY... YOU!
STOP!
IT'S AN ORDER FROM ABOVE!
THAT CAN'T BE...
CONTAINING THE WITCHES WHO CELEBRATE ON WALPURGIS EVE IS MORE IMPORTANT...
YOU MUST OBEY!
THANK YOU
IF I RECALL CORRECTLY, YOU ARE TOBIA, YES?
HMPH!
DON'T GET AHEAD OF YOURSELF! I HAVE NO INTENTION OF PLAYING AT FRIENDS WITH YOU DEMONS.
I WOULD NOT BE HERE IF NOT FOR EL'S ORDERS!

THAT!
MASTER TOBIA AND I SHOULD BE POUNDING A WEAK-LOOKING GUY LIKE YOU INTO THE DUST!
HEH
DANGER-OUS? HOW CRUEL. .
I LIVE IN THE FAR CORNERS OF THE UNDER-WORLD AND LOATHE WAR-FARE. WHAT ABOUT ME IS DANGEROUS?
SOMEONE AS DAN-GEROUS AS YOU...
HE HE
YOU FOOL! THAT'S WHY...
You're a nobody!
HE IS ALIVE, RIGHT?
YES.
MASTER! HE....
TO JUST LOSE CON-SCIOUSNESS AFTER BEING WALLOPED BY A VIRTUES... WHAT A HARDY GUY.
Isn't that great? If he'd died, you'd be exiled.
phew
I'M GLAD.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, HE'S JUST UN-CONSCIOUS
CRAIG ...?

I SEE.
nod
IS HE THE ONE?
pinch
WELL DONE, RALPH. YOU PICKED QUITE A FINE FRIEND.
I'M SURE HE'LL BE USEFUL TO YOU.
YOU'RE THE SACRIFICE I'M MAKING FOR MY DREAM....
ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE HIM, TOO?
I...
OF COURSE... WHOSE SAKE DO YOU THINK THIS IS FOR?
CRAIG, WHAT...
IS A DREAM?
MASTER RALPH, YOU DON'T LOOK TOO WELL.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YOU'VE DONE A TERRIBLE THING TO YOUR COMPANION.
YOU THERE, LITTLE ONE
HOH?
SHOCK
EH?
ME? NO, IT'S NOTHING...
MAY THE GRACE OF GOD BE WITH YOU
HMPH!
HOW VERY OMINOUS
Could you cut it out?
TAP
LET'S GO.
TAP

HMPH!
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING A TOUGH TIME.
REALLY? WELL, SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE
BUT YOU KNOW, ALL THE FUSS IS BECAUSE OF THOSE IMPS GATHERING OVER THERE.
CREEP CRAWL
WORK HARD ON EXTERMINATING THEM!
WHAT?!
GEH!
TCH
CAN'T GET A WORD IN EDGEWISE WITH HIM...
MASTER TOBIA!
I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS! AND BESIDES... THAT CHILD!
WHY IS HE IN THIS WORLD?
.....
Is it really okay?
BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW...
AND BECAUSE HE IS PROTECTED BY A POWERFUL CHARM.
THAT'S RIGHT.
BY A DEMON...
THAT...
WE CANNOT GET INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE IN A CONTRACT— ESPECIALLY NOT SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
NO— IT WOULD BE BETTER NOT TO...

I WONDER WHERE WE'RE GOING...
WHOA! I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS SKY IN 7 YEARS...
MAYBE WE'RE GOING TO ECK'S CASTLE AFTER ALL...
BDMP
RALPH.
OH, WHAT SHOULD I DO?
AM I GETTING NERVOUS NOW?
BDMP
WHY WERE YOU IN THE FOREST...?
OH...
EH?
THE FOREST? WELL...
BDMP
AH...
IN THIS CONDITION, HE WON'T MAKE IT TO THE CASTLE...
MASTER! MASTER RALPH...
...I GUESS THERE'S NO CHOICE
WE'LL HAVE TO DO IT THERE AFTER ALL.

IN THE DILAPIDATED CHURCH IN THAT GRAVE-YARD...
IT IS ALSO THE PLACE WERE I MADE THE PACT WITH THAT MAN.
AND FOUND...
BUT THAT'S THE WITCHES' HANG-OUT...
CHASE THEM OUT!!
They're having their Walpurgis assembly.
WHAT... ECK?
IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS... THIS IS IT!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS! WE'VE GOTTEN THIS FAR...
BDMP
BDMP
BDMP
HEY...
MY HEARTBEAT IS SO LOUD... MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE OF THE SKY.
SOMEONE'S CRYING.
THAT'S...
ECK WAITED FOR ME, TOO.

!
WHY DOES MOM CRY WHEN I TALK TO HER...?
HEY...
GRANDPA'S ROOM IS...!
WHY... WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME!
LOOK AT REALITY! STOP YOUR TALK ABOUT DEMONS AND SUCH!
COME, LET ME HAVE THAT PICTURE BOOK OF YOURS
I'M NOT LYING! I CAN SEE THEM!
NO!!
STOP! DON'T COME NEAR ME! THIEF!!
See, that's the boy
There are rumors that he's possessed
Oh, my! And he looks like such a sweet boy!
FOR RALPH.
EVERYONE'S SO SELFISH!
LET ME GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS "MY BROTHER"
SO I'LL DO WHAT I WANT, TOO. I DON'T WANT TO STAY AT HOME.
BUT NO ONE BELIEVES THE THINGS THAT I BELIEVE... SO THERE'S NO PLACE FOR ME.

THE ONE I MET WHEN I WAS FIVE, MY ANGEL (THOUGH HE'S A DEMON).
HE'S BEAUTIFUL AND SMART AND GENTLE, AND HE ACTUALLY SAW ME.
I WAS ABLE TO LIVE UNTIL NOW BECAUSE I MET HIM.
THE THINGS I BELIEVE...
GRANDPA.
ECK'S BLACK FEATHER.
AND ECKBERT.
MY PACT WITH HIM IS MY ONLY SUPPORT.
ECK!
I'M GOING!
No!
LET GO!
!
RALPH!
WAIT, RALPH...
YOU JUST DON'T KNOW! LOOK AROUND YOU...!
BECAUSE... I ALWAYS BELIEVED I WOULD.

ECK!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, RALPH?
ECK... WHAT SHOULD I DO?!
I... I LOST MY FEATHER!
AND IT WAS SO IMPORTANT TO ME...
...UH.
YOU NO LONGER NEED IT, SO IT LEFT YOU.
I DON'T... NEED IT?
AFTER ALL, I'M RIGHT HERE— THE REAL THING
YOU TREASURED THEM, DIDN'T YOU.
THAT FEATHER AND THAT BOOK WERE PARTS OF ME THERE TO PROTECT YOU THOSE SEVEN YEARS
YOU KEPT THE TWO PROMISES...
AND SO THE CONDITIONS FOR YOUR WISH HAVE COME TOGETHER.
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS THE CEREMONY THAT WILL FINALLY CHANGE YOUR DREAM INTO REALITY...
ALL RIGHT?

IF WE WERE ONLY GOING TO MAKE A DOLL THERE ARE COUNTLESS WAYS.
BUT THAT WOULD BE MEANING-LESS...
MASTER ...
IS THERE REALLY NO OTHER WAY?
I...
IF I WERE GOING TO MAKE HIM A DOLL, I WOULDN'T HAVE MADE THE PACT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
I WANT TO KEEP THAT CHILD BY MY SIDE.
BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING!
I... I CERTAINLY WANT TO REPAIR THAT MISTAKE THAT OCCURRED SEVEN YEARS AGO

JUST LIKE YOU, VELTA.
...SO I HAVE TO MAKE HIM CHOOSE.
I NEVERTHE-LESS ONCE GAVE HIM A CHANCE.
AND..
WHILE IT WAS UNCONSCIOUSLY, HE TURNED IT DOWN.

WHERE AM I? (I FEEL LIKE I KNOW IT.)
HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A CEREMONY, BUT...
SO SILLY.
FLOP
I DID WANT TO GO HOME, AT LEAST... (WELL, WHATEVER, IT'S OKAY.)
...IT WAS KIND OF DISAPPOINTING.
A PRESENT FOR MOM.
LET GO OF HIM!
THE FLOWERS... WENT TO WASTE, DIDN'T THEY, CRAIG...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, TRYING TO SNATCH AWAY MY BROTHER...?!

...OH, STOP IT.
EH...
WHAT AM I THINK-ING...?
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN A BUSY-BODY. THAT'S NOTHING NEW.
RALPH.
WELCOME TO OUR TEMPORARY ALTAR.
WE WILL NOW PER-FORM THE CEREMONY FOR YOU.
REACH
IF YOU HAVE NO OBJECTIONS, GIVE ME YOUR HAND.

A DEMONIC SWORD...!?
BY YOUR OWN WILL, DRAW IT FROM THE SHEATH.
SEVER ANY REGRETS, SO THAT YOUR DREAM WILL BECOME REALITY...
YOU HAVE JUST RECEIVED WHAT YOU MOST NEED RIGHT NOW.
THANK YOU.
NOW, RALPH.
THIS IS SOMETHING FROM YOUR ECKBERT.
THE DEMONIC SWORD OF AZURE...
IT IS A DIRK THAT, WHEN YOU HOLD IT, MAKES ANOTHER'S LIFE POWER YOUR OWN...
SINK THAT BLADE INTO HIS CHEST.

CRAIG.
WHEN ECK SAID IT...
I THOUGHT, "AFTER ALL— JUST LIKE I THOUGHT."
...I'M SORRY.
BMDP
I...
BMDP
!
flinch
RALPH?
OH... SO YOU WERE OKAY...
GOOD

...WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE PALE. AND WHAT'S THAT SWORD FOR?
IS SOMEONE ELSE THERE?
It's him.
HE'S GAINED CONSCIOUSNESS ...?! IMPOSSIBLE!
HE'S INSIDE A BARRIER!
AH...
I HAD THE STRANGEST DREAM...
WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO CRAIG...
AH, I'M STILL DIZZY.
Damn it.
A BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN ANGEL TOLD ME TO WAKE UP.
"EL" DID...!
DON'T LET YOUR SEVEN YEARS GO TO WASTE!
DON'T BE SWAYED!
YOU HAVE NO MORE TIME!
RALPH!

HEY, ECK... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
SO...
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, ECK...
...IT'S OKAY.
BUT... WHY, I WONDER?
.....I...
BMDP
RALPH!
DON'T COME!
IF YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE, THEN I'LL HELP.
GRIP THE HILT...!

I'M SORRY.
RALPH ...?
THUNK
OF COURSE. WHO WOULD IN THIS SITUATION?
RAL ...
?!

EVEN IF YOU TURN THE BLADE ON YOURSELF,
YOU SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO ACTUALLY KILL YOURSELF.
...NOT WITH THAT DIRK...
CLANK
fwoosh
WHA-
HOLD ON A...
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME! WHAT IS THIS...

...RALPH DISAP-PEARED?
...THIS CAN'T BE REAL, RIGHT?
.....IS THAT *YOUR* ANSWER...?

IT CAN'T BE...
IT'S SOME KIND OF MAGIC OR SOMETHING...
WHO ARE YOU TWO? MAGICIANS OR SOMETHING...? YOU KNOW HIM?
PLEASE...
WHERE DID YOU HIDE HIM? COULD YOU GIVE HIM BACK, PLEASE...?
.....
THERE'S NO HELPING IT. PLEASE, MASTER, SETTLE IT QUIETLY.
WHERE ARE WE? HOW DID I... WHERE IS HE?
.....
SINCE YOU HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS, I'LL ANSWER YOU.
MY NAME IS VALAFAR, AND I AM ONE OF THE RANKING NOBILITY IN HELL.
WHAT YOU WOULD CALL A DEMON.

WHAT...
I MET RALPH SEVEN YEARS AGO TODAY, WHEN HE WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, HERE IN THIS GRAVEYARD.
IF HE OBEYED THE CONDITIONS, HE WOULD GET THE FUTURE HE DESIRED IN THE CEREMONY TODAY. THAT WAS HOW IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE.
AFTER SPENDING SEVEN DAYS IN MY CASTLE, WE MADE A PACT.
...WHAT IN THE WORLD IS HE SAYING?
AND THE ONE WHO RUINED IT ALL WAS YOU AND NO OTHER.
AT LEAST DO US THE FAVOR OF NOT GETTING ANY STRONGER.
annoyed
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM...?
WHAT ABOUT RALPH?
...I...
SO...
AT THE BEGINNING, I HAD NO INTENTION OF ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT WITH A HUMAN, MUCH LESS A CHILD.
THAT PACT— THAT VARTRAG— ALL BEGAN WITH THAT ACCIDENTAL OCCURRENCE THAT NIGHT SEVEN YEARS AGO.
ACCIDENTAL...?
OH, A CAT.
...WAIT.
OOH...
Huh?
...YOU KNOW, THE CHILD DIED ONCE THAT NIGHT WE TOOK HIM WITH US.
Eh?
The Cat Familiar

IT IS, OF COURSE, SOMETHING THAT RALPH HIMSELF DOES NOT KNOW.
NO, IT IS BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KNOW...
THAT HE COULD COME AS FAR AS TODAY.
THE CHILD ISN'T WAKING UP...?
...OR SHOULD I SAY, HIS SOUL LEFT HIS BODY WITHOUT HIM REALIZING IT..
GASP
...HUH?
HE HAD FLOWN TO BE NEAR HIS GRANDFATHER'S SOUL...
BECAUSE OF HIS PURITY, HE WAS CALLED BY THE COUNTLESS THOUSANDS OF SOULS IN THE CASTLE.
THE CHILD IS IN DANGER IN THIS CASTLE...
IF HE'S IN THE CASTLE, HIS SOUL CAN STILL BE RETURNED.
HOWEVER
THE MOMENT THE SOUL REALIZES, IT WILL ALL VANISH.
EVEN IF IT DOESN'T REALIZE, HIS TEMPORARY FORM WILL DECAY.
I HAVE TO MAKE MY MOVE BEFORE THAT HAPPENS...
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
AS IF I'D BELIEVE THAT!
I DON'T PARTICULARLY NEED YOU TO BELIEVE ME.

NOR DO I NEED YOU TO REMEMBER IT. IT'S JUST A HUMAN MEMORY, NOTHING MORE.
AFTER ALL, YOU'LL SOON FORGET...
RALPH'S EXISTENCE THESE SEVEN YEARS.
shudder
FORGET ...?
NO...
YOU'RE LYING!!
HE'S REAL ...?!
YOU CAN'T DO THAT!
I DON'T WANT TO!
WITH MY POWER, I CAN DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT QUITE EASILY...
TOO BAD FOR YOU
"SOME-THING LIKE THAT"...?

Ah...
JUST WHAT ARE YOU TO HIM?!
IF HE'S "JUST HUMAN, NOTHING MORE," THEN WHY DO YOU BOTHER WITH HIM?!
THAT DEMON ...!!
Step
Hey!
WHERE IS HE? WHERE IS RALPH?!
ANSWER ME!!
VANISH?
REALLY, TRULY, DIS-APPEAR...?
STEP

Wish
IN THE END, WHAT IS LEFT TO VALA?
... WELL, NOW.
...SPENDING SEVEN YEARS, GAMBLING ON NOTHING MORE THAN A HUMAN CHILD.
HE MUST BE OUT OF HIS MIND...
GIVE HIM BACK ...!!

mistress
Well,
SHOULD I BUY YOU A CASTLE OR SOMETHING IN A DRUNKEN FRENZY?
THE ONE THING THAT'S FOR SURE IS THIS BILL FOR THE SWORD.
WHAT COULD HE POSSIBLY BE THINKING...
I SIMPLY CANNOT UNDERSTAND VALA'S SENSE OF VALUES.
AND WHAT'S MORE,
JUST WHEN I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO AT LEAST KEEP HIS SOUL WITH YOU,
YOU HAND HIM OVER TO HEAVEN?
Whoa.
LOOK AT THAT. HOW UNUSUAL.
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF FEATHER IT IS.
Hmph
IT'S JUST A FEATHER.
...YOU'RE BECOMING A BIG BROTHER SOON, AREN'T YOU?
COULD YOU STOP TALKING LIKE THAT?
...
I HOPE IT'S A GIRL.
NO WAY, A BOY WOULD BE TONS BETTER!
A little brother!

...YOU'RE THERE, AREN'T YOU? I KNOW YOU ARE.
COME ON OUT.
MICHAEL GARDNER
RALPH!
See, there you are.
IF YOU KEEP ON WANDERING LIKE THAT, SOON YOU REALLY WON'T BE ABLE TO GO ANYWHERE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
.....
YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME EVEN IF I TOLD YOU.

OH, MY, WHAT A CHILD.
WHEN DID MY RALPH BECOME SO TIMID OUTSIDE?
IT'S ALL RIGHT TELL ME
MAYBE I CAN HELP.
IF YOU WANT TO BE WITH YOUR GRANDPA, THEN MAYBE I CAN...
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
ECK, I LOVE YOU...
I pretty much cancelled last minute
...WHY ARE YOU BEING SO NICE TO ME, ECK?
...YOU'RE ACTUALLY ANGRY, RIGHT?
...AREN'T YOU ACTUALLY ANGRY, TOO?
AT ME.
WHY?
I LOVE YOU, ECK...
I WAITED BE-CAUSE I WANTED TO TELL YOU.

WAIT...
...I DON'T WANT TO GO ANYWHERE.....
...ECK.
GO ON.
BUT...
GO TO THE GATES OF HEAVEN AND MEET EL— RAPHAEL.
I DON'T THINK HE COULD IGNORE YOU.
rustle

VELTA, DO YOU REMEMBER?
LEAP
I GUESS... YOU WON OUR BET.
WHO KNOWS?
I DON'T REALLY THINK SO...
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, MASTER— YOU SENT HIM TO "EL?"
THERE IS SUCH A THING AS BEING TOO NICE, YOU KNOW...
NOT AT ALL.
pat
turn
WANDERING TALE
TALE 1 END

Vartrag Tale "Valafar"

フェアトラーク物語
VARTRAG TALE
万聖節のラルフェ

沖 麻実也
Mamiya Oki

ZERO COMICS

フェアトラーク物語
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MAMIYA OKI'S VARTRAG TALE

悪魔との契約は、人にとって魅力的である。
ただそれには「幸運」と「恐ろしい結末」の両方がつきまとう。
ここに魔界の公爵・ヴァラファールがいる。
第一支配階級の上級悪魔ながら、人間界で暮らす変わり者の彼は
ワルプルギスの夜に孤独な少年・ラルフと契約を結ぶ。
不思議な『契約』の結末は無慈悲なものか、それとも……？
ミステリアスなオムニバス・ストーリー。
大幅な加筆と描き下ろしを加えた
『契約物語』新装版の鍵がついに――

Vartrag Tale

Series Note

Vartrag Tale was originally printed as a 1-volume work. The mangaka later drew more chapters. The contents of the 1-volume edition were split up into 2 volumes, and additional chapters were added to each volume to create the 2-volume edition. Thus, the 2-volume edition contains all the material from the 1-volume edition plus more — but not in the same order.

The scanlations of chapters 1-3 were from the 1-volume printing, and we are continuing the scanlation from the 2-volume printing. However, chapters 1-3 of the 1-volume and 2-volume editions are essentially identical (the Vartrag Tale title story), so you're not missing/skipping anything. We have included the 2-volume edition's cover, color pages, and table of contents in this release.

Also! Oki Mamiya has romanized some names differently than what was used in the earlier scanlations. Please note: Velta = Belta (she's also romanized this as Berta); Reis = Laithe

Final note: The title itself "Vartrag Tale" is an incorrect romanization of the word "Vertrag" (German for "pact"). You'll see it romanized correctly in the story itself.

Please enjoy!

Vertrag Tale

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VARTRAG TALE CHAPTER 4

BY OKI MAMIYA

THE END

RAW HUNTER/QC ISHITORI
TRANSLATOR KALENDEL
CLEANER ANPANMAYO
TYPESETTER REMY

THE-END-MANGA.LIVEJOURNAL.COM

HEAD TO OUR BLOG TO VOTE FOR THE
NEXT MANGA WE COMPLETE!

Ralphie's All Saint's Day

~All Saint's Day~

Vartnig Tale

RALPH,
YOUR BROTHER'S HOME.
COME ON DOWN.
OK, MOM!
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!

A whole month!
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN HOME IN A WHILE!
Hup!
YOU LOOK GOOD!
WHAT, HAVE YOU GOTTEN A SMIDGE BIGGER? MY LITTLE HELPER.
HEYA RALPH!
stomp stomp
CRAIG!
BRO!
BOARD-ING SCHOOL?
Yeah.
THAT'S WHY I'M NOT SURE ABOUT IT... FLOMPELTON ACADEMY IS YOUR OLD SCHOOL, RIGHT?
IS IT THAT TIME ALREADY? YOU'RE STILL YOUNG.
Yeah.
Pat
I take after my old man
WHAT!?
Let's go eat? ♡
My, they get along so well.
RALPH'S A GOOD KID. COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM A CERTAIN JOURNALIST WHEN HE WAS A CHILD.
Now now.
HE'S FIRST IN HIS CLASS IN GRADE SCHOOL WITH A DOTING BROTHER. HE'S COMPLETELY SPOILED.
Oh? YOU'RE TOP OF YOUR CLASS?
HEHE ♡

Ahaha
Gotta laugh.
THAT'S FINE! I'M STRONG.
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.
I'd forgotten.
I could use a midget like you as my gofer.
DON'T BE NAIVE! THAT SCHOOL IS AS STRICT AS A PRISON.
YOU'D CRY THE WHOLE TIME.
IF I GO TO A LOCAL SCHOOL I CAN VISIT YOUR PLACE TO PLAY.
MAYBE I REALLY SHOULD GO.
Smart♪
Here
FROM LAITHE, FOR HIS RALPHIE BOY.
—RIGHT THEN I DIDN'T THINK ANYTHING OF IT.
TO THINK THAT A SINGLE FEATHER...
MIGHT CHANGE MY FATE...
IT'S PRETTY...
HE SAID IT FELL OUT WHEN HE WAS SORTING OLD BOOKS...
OPEN IT.
...BOY?
YEP, YOU.
hm—
YOU LIKE IT?
THANKS!♡ I'LL TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT.
YEAH!
Tell Laithe thanks!
THOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF FEATHER IT IS. A RARE ONE, FOR SURE.
RIGHT?
Whoa!♡

TWO YEARS LATER...
FLOMPELTON ACADEMY
PUFF
COUGH
Tch—
NOPE, ANOTHER FAILURE.
...MAYBE IT REALLY WON'T WORK DURING THE DAY.
My calculations about the date should have been right.
ANYWAY! I'LL TRY IT AGAIN FROM SCRATCH.
This really was a bad spot.
I'VE GOT TO RESEARCH THE COMPONENTS MORE...
OOPS!
Whoa, there's smoke! What is it? A fire!? It smells sweet?
MR. BRADLEY.

ALL SAINTS' DAY
GUY FAWKES NIGHT
HALLOWEEN
WE WOULD BE ABLE TO GET A HOLD OF HIM.
YES... BUT WELL...
BUT RIGHT NOW THE SCHOOL'S IN A MESS OVER THE HALLOWEEN AND GUY FAWKES FESTIVAL, SO EVERYTHING'S COMPLETELY DISORGANIZED ...
SORRY FOR THE WAIT.
...TO BE HONEST, WE CAN'T FIND RALPH ...
CAN'T FIND HIM?
I'M SURE THERE WAS SOME MISUNDER-STANDING.
NO,
Not your fault
SORRY, HE'S MY RESPONSIBIL-ITY AS DORM LEADER.
—— OCTOBER...
IT'S BEEN ABOUT A YEAR SINCE RALPH CAME TO THIS BOARDING SCHOOL.
HE MANAGED TO PERSUADE OUR PARENTS,
AND ENTERED SCHOOL A YEAR EARLY.
I'LL TAKE A WALK BEFORE I HEAD HOME.
SORRY FOR TAKING UP YOUR TIME.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
CLACK

HEY!
YOU THERE!
WHY WOULD THAT SWEET KID...
AND FINALLY OUR FOLKS CAME TO ME IN TEARS...
THAT'S FINE.
BUT THIS PAST YEAR...
HE BARELY VISITED HOME OR SENT ANY LETTERS.
...AS IF HE WERE AVOIDING HIS FAMILY——
OH!
IT IS YOU! CRAIG BRADLEY!
MY, YOU'VE TURNED INTO QUITE THE ROBUST YOUNG MAN!
OH
PRO-FESSOR ANGUS!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE. YOU LOOK GOOD... CAN'T BELIEVE YOU RECOG-NIZED ME.
I COULDN'T FORGET A TROUBLE-MAKER LIKE YOU IF I WANTED TO.
IN THAT REGARD, YOUR BROTHER'S SO GOOD YOU'D THINK YOU AREN'T RELATED. YOU HERE TO SEE HIM?
YEAH ...
...SIR, SHOULD I GO ON AHEAD?
I'll get behind with the next set of prepara tions.
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT. Sorry.

SORRY, MR. BRADLEY.
I DIDN'T THINK THIS WOULD HAPPEN ...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
TO THE PROFESSOR, I'LL STILL BE LIKE HIS STUDENT NO MATTER HOW LONG GOES BY.
Brings back memories.
UM...
I'M FALSCH.
To make a visitor carry things
IS HERE FINE?
YES... THANKS FOR HELPING OUT.
LEAN
MR. FALSCH.
ME AGAIN ...
YO
LOOKS LIKE THE LIBRARIAN IS BACK.
Thanx.

BRO...
RALPH.
!
wham
RALPH ...!?
...YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CHASE AFTER HIM?
...NO.

huff
CRAIG...
huff
BROTHER!
BUT... WHY?
IT'S FINE, THERE'S NO POINT IN CHASING HIM.
YOU SAW IT TOO, RIGHT?
—HE WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME...
YOU CAME TO SEE ME, BUT...

I WANT TO KNOW. THE ONE QUESTION WHICH HAS ONLY GROWN THESE PAST TWO YEARS—
SORRY. YOU MUST THINK I'M A HORRIBLE KID...
BUT...
THIS BLACK FEATHER.
...IF ONLY...
WHO IS HE...
IF ONLY I HADN'T SEEN THIS ——
BUT I CAN'T DO IT...
JUST WHO IS "RALPH" !?
I CAN'T IGNORE THE MEMORIES IN THIS FEATHER.
I CAN'T STOP. ...I'VE ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND.
I'D BEEN HESITATING THIS WHOLE TIME ——

NEWS PAPER
I'M BACK.
THANK GOODNESS.
WELCOME BACK, MR. BRADLEY.
MRS. BECKETT.
flap.
grow!
Hey you!
I'm starving, starving I say.
LAITHE, BACK OFF. MRS. BECKETT, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING?
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO SAY TO THOUGHTLESS VISITORS WHO SAUNTER IN AT THIS EARLY AN HOUR!
YOU'RE ALWAYS JUST WANDERING AROUND ...
DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY!? IF YOU'RE GOING TO DISAPPEAR FOR DAYS, AT LEAST SEND A TELEGRAM!
Now now, that's fine. As long as you're well.
I'll make you something right away.
I'm sorry.
It was work ...
rumble
As your roommate, I have to calm her down.
YOU WORRY THE LADY!
Boarding House Landlady

...GEEZ,
BY YOUR FACE, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU LOST A SCOOP OR SOMETHING.
All stormy.
HOW FAR DID YOU CHASE IT THIS TIME? DEVON? YORK?
BOTH.
AND RALPH GOT AWAY, TOO.
RALPHIE BOY? HUH...
AND?
That's terrible.
...DON'T TELL ME ...
PUFF
THAT'S ACTUALLY THE REASON YOU STAYED OUT?
...NO.
YOU'RE THE OFF ONE.
YOU KNOW, MAYBE THAT'S WHAT RALPH'S THINKING TOO. THAT KID'S SMART.
CRAIG,
YOU'VE GOT TO "DISCONNECT" FROM YOUR BROTHER A LITTLE.
The two of us are 26

I'VE ALWAYS FELT THIS VAGUE ANXIETY...
EVER SINCE RALPH WAS BORN.
IT'S NOT THAT, I KNOW THAT MUCH.
I...
I'VE JUST GOT THIS FEELING THAT IF I DON'T PROTECT RALPH, HE'LL GO OFF SOMEWHERE.
THIS TIME I WON'T LET HIM GO.
JUST WHAT IS IT...?
THIS TIME?
What're you talking about?
.....
I DON'T KNOW ...
WHY I FEEL THIS WAY...
MAYBE I REALLY AM OFF.
EXACTLY... YOU NEED TO REST SOME.
LISTEN TO A DOCTOR EVERY ONCE AND A WHILE...

PUNKY!
HAH!
PUMPKINS ARE SO OLD-FASHIONED.
Hey, guys!
RALPH, IS YOUR COSTUME DONE?
You're slacking off.
SHUT UP! IT'S HALLOWEEN, YOU HAVE TO HAVE THEM!
Tadaa!♥
PUNKY'S DONE!
Ignore
NOT MAKING ONE.
ANYONE SEEN MY MASK?
Hold it!
WE'VE GOTTA HAVE OUR "ANGEL" FOR THE PARADE CENTERPIECE!
WHY?
I said from the start I didn't want to!
WHO WANTS TO BE AN ANGEL!?
Shut up!
YOU SERIOUS!? IT'S IN A WEEK.
For real?
Now now.
THOSE ROLES WOULD BE COMPLETELY WRONG FOR THE BOTH OF YOU, SO QUIT IT.
You want to be the angel
I KNOW, I'LL TRADE FOR YOUR WEREWOLF, RUDY. DO THAT AND I'LL MAKE THE COSTUME, TOO.
GAH!
Heh.
THE RUNT'S JUST FULL OF HIMSELF.
MY FOLKS ARE COMING AND I'M A SCARECROW. IT'S LAME.
Sounds great.
WHY NOT? THE ANGEL'S THE STAR.
Isn't it nice to have the spotlight?

But...
WHY DO YOU HATE IT SO MUCH!?
Stop it!
I could be the angel!
Not going by your looks!
BECAUSE I JUST DON'T LIKE THAT STUFF!
Oh, so he hates angels?
IS THAT WHY YOU ONLY READ BOOKS ABOUT DEMONS?
Hmph
HE LIKES CALLING THEM SPECIAL-IZED RELIGIOUS TEXTS.
Isn't that kinda bad?
WHOA!
QUIT IT, GUYS!
But demons are ugly!
C'mon, say something else!!
SLAM!
GAH!
IT'S THE BOARD!
WHO'S YOUR GROUP LEADER!?
SECOND YEARS! WHAT'S THIS RUCKUS ABOUT!?
MR. FALSCH.
POP
Ah!
RALPH'S GONE.
That rascal ran off
Dammit!
I'M SURE HE WAS JUST LOOKING FOR A REASON.
We're just gofers to them.
GET GOING!!
AS PUNISH-MENT, I'M MAKING YOU HELPERS FOR THE UPPER-CLASS-MEN!
FLOP

WAIT JUST A MOMENT. I'LL BE WITH YOU AS SOON AS I FINISH TIDYING UP HERE.
SURE.
OH, BRADLEY.
SHOULDN'T YOU BE IN CLASS?
MY... YOU'RE QUITE THE REBEL.
...WILL YOU TELL THE PROFES-SOR?
HOW COULD I?
THINGS GOT CRAZY SO I SLIPPED OUT.
YEAH, BUT WITH THE ALL SAINT'S DAY FESTIVAL STUFF THERE ARE NO LESSONS.

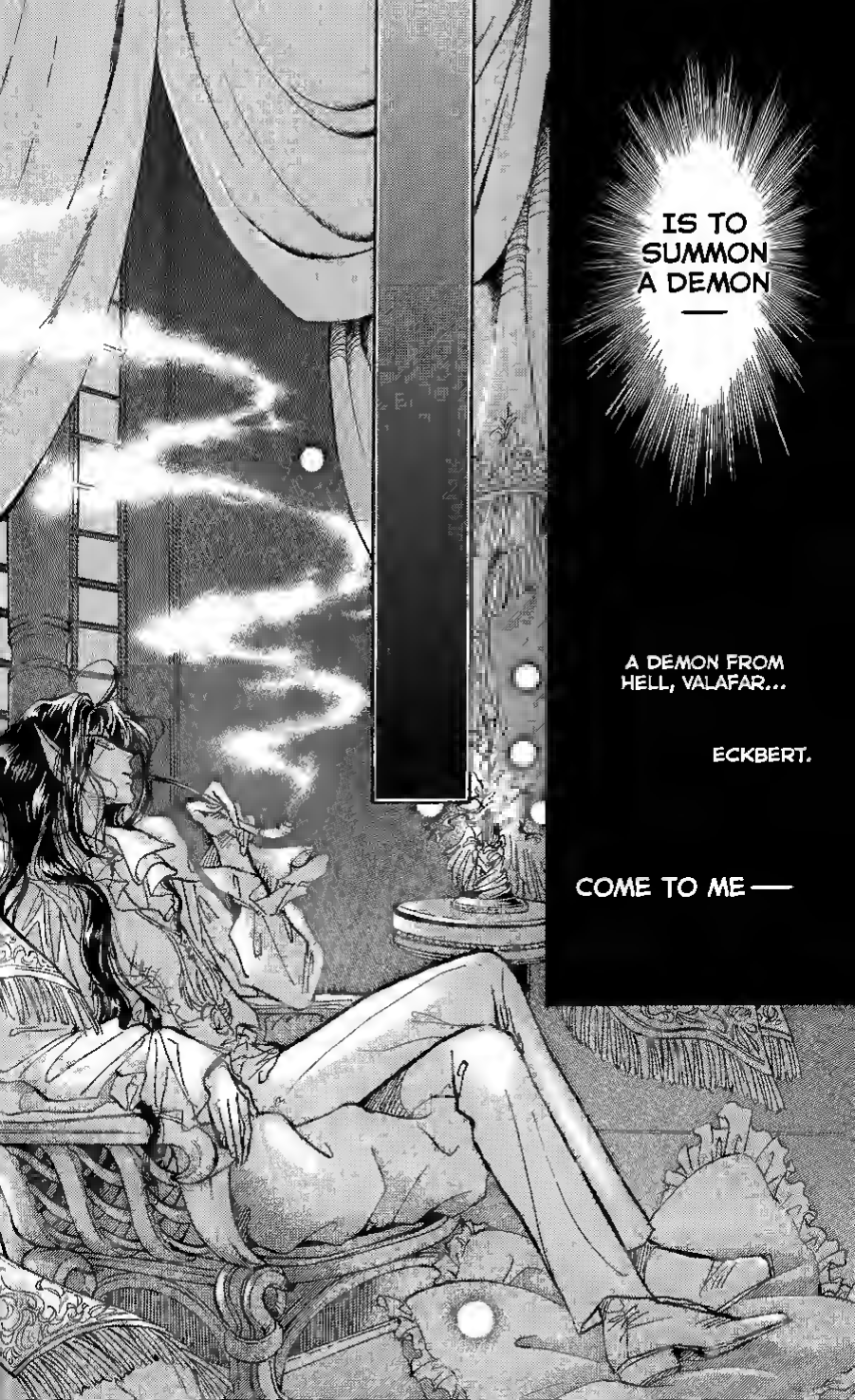
I'VE GOT SOME MORE BOOKS I WANT TO FIND.
YEAH...
And a temp, at that.
I'M JUST A LIBRARIAN, AFTER ALL.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK.
ANYWAY, CAN I HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING?
I DON'T TALK ABOUT IT BECAUSE PEOPLE WILL LAUGH.
I WON'T LAUGH.
ARE YOU STUDYING "BLACK MAGIC" OR SOMETHING?
"CLAVICULA TAFLAHAM ENOCH",
"JANUA MAGIAE REFERATA",
"THE GREAT CLAVICLE",
"THE KEY OF SOLOMON"...
...DO YOU HAVE THEM?
And all strange books
WELL, WE CAN TRY LOOKING. YOU REALLY DO READ A LOT.
...TRUTH IS...
MY AUNT WAS A GYPSY, SO THIS SORT OF THING ISN'T ENTIRELY FOREIGN TO ME.
Here, first one
Wow♡ This is it, thanks!
Whoa.
REALLY ...! IS THAT WHY...?
YOU'RE SO GOOD AT FINDING BOOKS LIKE THIS. THE OLD LIBRARIAN DIDN'T KNOW A THING AND JUST SAID WE DIDN'T HAVE THEM.

YOUR BROTHER SEEMS LIKE A NICE GUY. YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE HIM WORRY, DO YOU...?
...
jolt
BY THE WAY... WHY DID YOU RUN AWAY BEFORE?
FORGIVE ME, I DIDN'T MEAN TO INTRUDE.
I'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO SEE CRAIG RIGHT NOW...
mutter
IF..
IF I DREAMT THAT ANOTHER ME KILLED THE PERSON THAT I CARE MOST ABOUT...
WHAT DO YOU THINK I SHOULD DO?
OH?
...HEY.

...I'D SAY YOU'RE TOO GENTLE TO KILL.
...AH...
I-I MEAN, HYPOTHETICALLY.
I WOULDN'T LET HIM...
YEAH, I THINK THE SAME.
THAT'S RIGHT...
IT'S A CHARM. TAKE IT.
MR. FALSCH ...?
I'M SURE IT'LL HELP YOU OUT.
jingle
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND, BUT...
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO MAKE SURE.

IT FEELS LIKE I KNOW HIM, THOUGH I'M SURE I'M IMAGINING THINGS...
...WHY GIVE IT TO ME?
IT'S STRANGE...
I NEVER PLANNED ON TELLING ANYONE, BUT...
THIS GUY...
YEAH. THANKS
WELL...
I'M THE TYPE WHO WANTS TO HELP PEOPLE ON A MISSION.
WILL YOU TAKE IT?
"I'M SORRY, CRAIG..."
"RALPH'S" FEELINGS, TRANSFERRED TO ME THROUGH THE FEATHER
THAT "RALPH" MADE A PACT WITH A DEMON ...
AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED?
COWARD!
SORRY ABOUT WHAT!?

CRAIG AT 14, "RALPH" AT 12.
WHAT HAPPENED 12 YEARS AGO!?
CRAIG AT 26, ME AT 12...
JUST WHO IS "RALPH"—!? (WHO AM I?)
NO ONE KNOWS OF "RALPH'S" EXISTENCE,
EXCEPT FOR ONE PERSON... (THAT'S THE TRUTH.)
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO MEET HIM.
WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO...
WHAT IS THIS ...!?
Ah!
THE MEANS I'VE FOUND TO SOLVE THIS MYSTERY ...
THIS TIME...
HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN FREE TO DO WHAT HE WANTED. SO WHY WAS CRAIG PART OF THE DEAL!?
IN A NORMAL PACT YOU JUST USE YOUR OWN SOUL, RIGHT!?
SO WHY...
BUT WE ARE HERE.
THE FEATHER'S "MEMORIES" SUDDENLY END FOUR DAYS BEFORE THE PROMISED DAY...

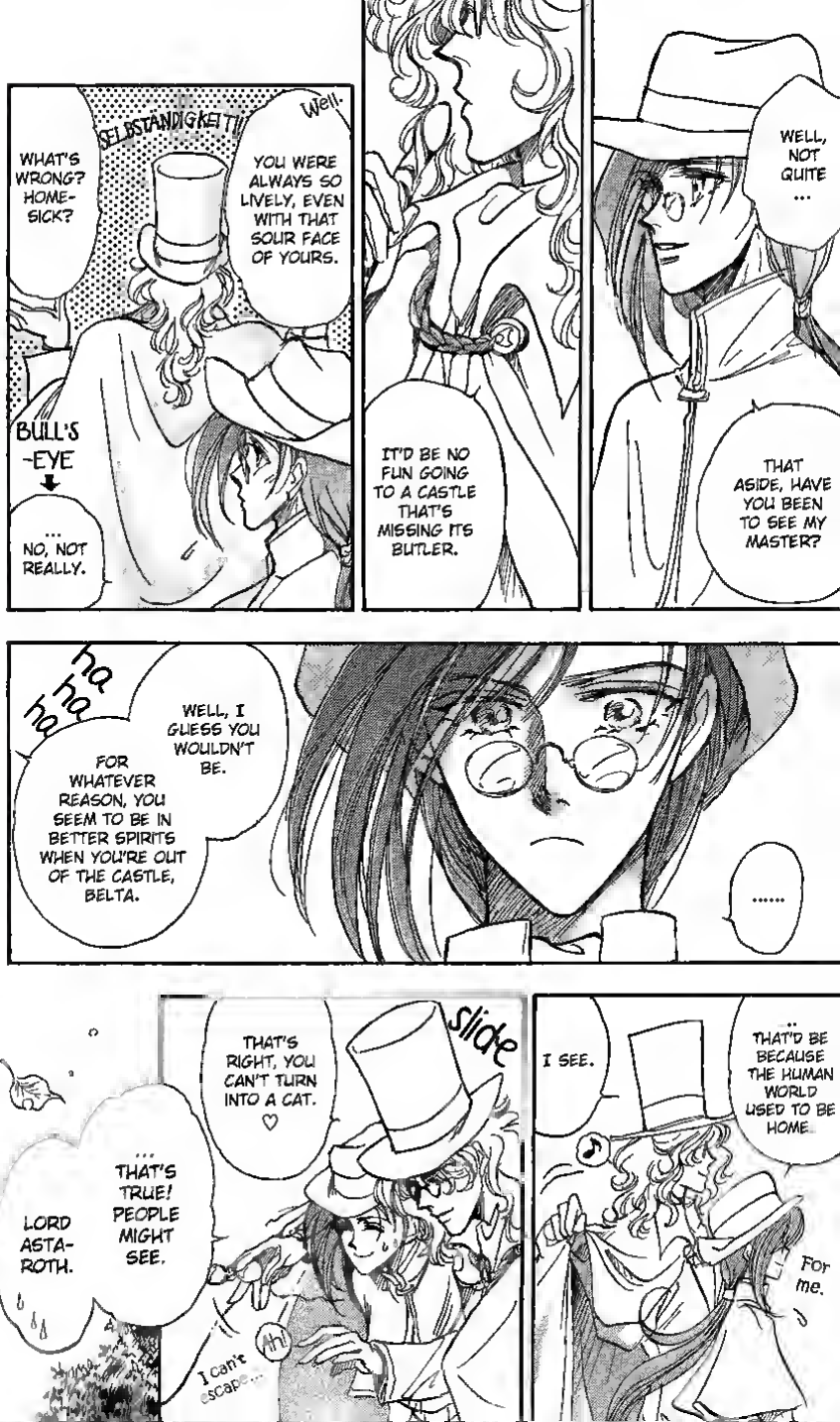

IS TO SUMMON A DEMON —
A DEMON FROM HELL, VALAFAR...
ECKBERT.
COME TO ME —

YOU'RE A SHREWD MAN,
"RALPH".
REALLY ...

12 YEARS AGO—
CRAIG BRADLEY DISAPPEARED FOR A SHORT WHILE.
SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...
A LONG-AWAITED CHILD WAS BORN TO HIS FATHER BY HIS SECOND WIFE.
IT WAS THE MOTHER LOUISE WHO NAMED HIM "RALPH".
CRAIG, THERE'S A SPRITE FLYING.
...I SEE. HOW ABOUT YOU ONLY TELL ME ABOUT THE SPRITES?
OK, FINE.
?

— EVEN NOT KNOWING WHY HE SAID SUCH THINGS...
THE TWO SIBLINGS BORN FAR APART ACTUALLY GREW VERY CLOSE,
AND BEFORE LONG RALPH FORGOT ABOUT THE "SPRITES"...
THE YEARS WENT BY WITHOUT INCIDENT
UNTIL ONE FEATHER APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE ...
Excuse me.
WOULD THE LADY LIKE A FLOWER?

...UH!
!
LORD ASTAROTH ...!?
YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE SO CRUEL TO STREET PEDDLERS, BELTA
You haven't been back in a while.
I'VE BEEN BORED RECENTLY. JUST GOT HERE.
YOU SEEM TO BE HAVING FUN.
THE SEED SEEMS TO BE BLOOMING, HM?
..HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THE HUMAN WORLD?


WELL, NOT QUITE ...
THAT ASIDE, HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE MY MASTER?
IT'D BE NO FUN GOING TO A CASTLE THAT'S MISSING ITS BUTLER.
Well.
YOU WERE ALWAYS SO LIVELY, EVEN WITH THAT SOUR FACE OF YOURS.
SELBSTANDIGKEIT!!
WHAT'S WRONG? HOME-SICK?
BULL'S -EYE
... NO, NOT REALLY.
.....
WELL, I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T BE.
ha ha ha
FOR WHATEVER REASON, YOU SEEM TO BE IN BETTER SPIRITS WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF THE CASTLE, BELTA.
I SEE.
... THAT'D BE BECAUSE THE HUMAN WORLD USED TO BE HOME.
For me.
slide
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU CAN'T TURN INTO A CAT. ♡
... THAT'S TRUE! PEOPLE MIGHT SEE.
LORD ASTA-ROTH.
Ah!
I can't escape...

Hi...
YES...!
OH!
MR. BRADLEY.
shock
UM... MR. FALSCH?
Is that you...?
squeeze
Tch
WHAT-EVER. I SEE, SO THIS IS HIM?
HMM.
URK!
!?
MY MY...
fug
THERE'S AN OLD MAN HAUNTING YOU— ONE CONNECTED TO YOU, BUT NOT BY BLOOD.
I couldn't say if it's good or bad
HUH?
IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'LL LIVE A LONG LIFE. WELL, GIVE IT YOUR BEST.
SEE-YA.
he he he
release
OH, THAT'S RIGHT.
TURN
BELTA, YOUR SPEC-TACLES ARE IN YOUR LEFT POCKET.
AND I PLAN TO HEAD BACK TO THE OTHER SIDE AT THE END OF THE YEAR.
Don't run away! Tell that to Vala, too
Huh?
adios

BACK THERE...
UM...
SORRY, IT LOOKS LIKE I REALLY GOT IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME-THING...
Ah...
NO, IT'S MY FAULT.
You might have helped me out there.
WHAT HAPPENED 12 YEARS AGO—
EVEN THOUGH HE SHOULDN'T REMEMBER IT,
HE...
...MR. BRADLEY.
...BUT THAT WAS ONE STRANGE GUY.
...YES, I SUPPOSE ...
HE'S THE REAL DEAL.
SO HE TELLS FORTUNES AND SUCH?
THERE'S SOMETHING SHOULD HAVE ASKED HIM ...
EH?
...NO, IT'S JUST THAT I'M PRONE TO WORRYING ...
ABOUT HIM.
I'm an oddball.

MR. FALSCH . . .
PLEASE BE SURE TO COME FOR THE ALL SAINT'S DAY FESTIVAL.
Thanx!
YOU MEAN A GREAT DEAL TO RALPH.
SST
.....
crunch

—Come Come
Answer me...

Cabala Kabbala...
I thought maybe it would work because I've got the "Kabbalah circle"
How it can't do it well!
NO GOOD, HUH...?
poof
silence
I am Ralph Bradley
Valafar, answer me...
poof
poof
I have come...
flap
!

IF...
IF IT'S REALLY YOU, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK YOU.
clench
THIS IS HIM...?
HE'S FROM "RALPH'S" PICTURE BOOK...
What is your desire, Ralph Bradley"?
You who have summoned me...
YES!
—you wish to make a "deal" with me?

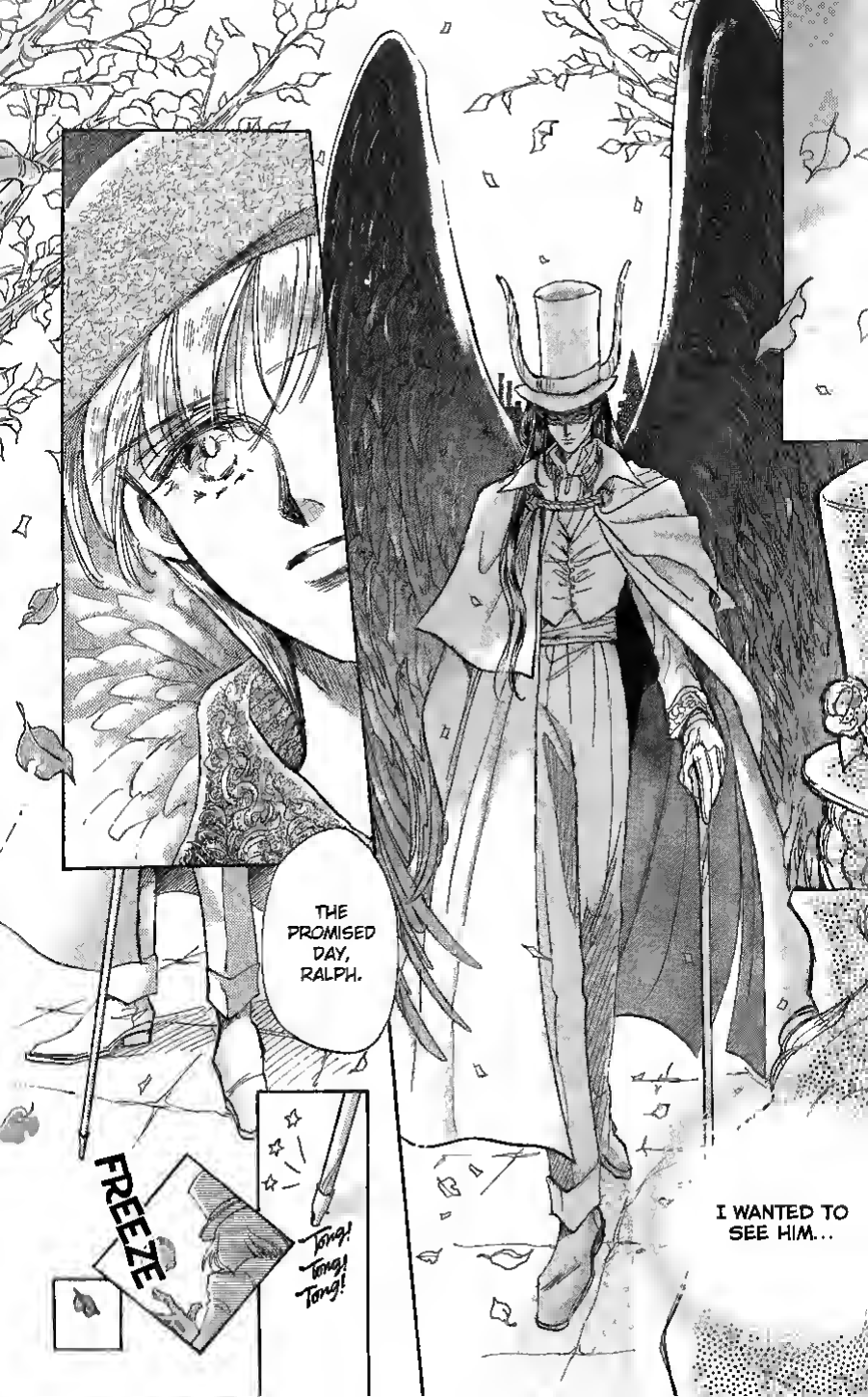
Are you prepared to pay the price for this "deal"?
Even if it means entering into a pact with a demon such as I?
...UH!
...what will knowing do?
THE TRUTH I WANT TO KNOW.
I WANT YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT THIS FEATHER..
"RALPH" SPENT SEVEN YEARS OF HIS LIFE FOR YOU, A DEMON...
WHY?
WHAT HAPPENED "FOUR DAYS LATER"?
WHAT AM I!?
I DON'T CARE!
THAT'S BETTER THAN GOING ON LIKE THIS NOT KNOWING WHO I AM!!
—I'M ALREADY TORN UP BY ALL THESE THINGS...!!
...very well.
Then —

Sign this contract—
Flap
Then I will restore your previous memories. Considering the effort you have gone through, I will unseal it...
The past and your new future—
slice

THIS IS THE ANSWER THAT I WANTED FOR MYSELF.
"I'M SORRY, CRAIG. I DON'T WANT TO HESITATE ANYMORE."
"I'VE A DREAM I WANT TO COME TRUE, NO MATTER WHAT."
THE ONE THING HE WANTED HE THREW AWAY ON THE FINAL DAY...
"I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT FOR SEVEN YEARS... GOING BACK TO ECK'S CASTLE."
"RALPH'S" WISH THAT WASN'T GRANTED TWELVE YEARS AGO.
BUT— NOW...
"LET GO OF MY BROTHER... LET GO OF RALPH!"
I'LL BE WAITING.
THOUGH "EL" IS BACK IN THE HUMAN WORLD ...
I'M GLAD I COULD MEET YOU AGAIN, "RALPH".
I WILL COME FOR YOU IN SEVEN DAYS.

SORRY, CRAIG...
I'VE REPEATED THE SAME MISTAKE.
HE AND I BOTH THOUGHT ONLY OF OURSELVES...
CRAIG, THIS WHOLE TIME...
...IF I HADN'T HAD MY BROTHER,
I MIGHT HAVE WOUND UP LIKE "HIM".
I ONLY JUST REALIZED IT...!
THAT I HAD SOME-THING WORTH MORE TO ME...
UH...
I...
UH...
BRO ...

—FLOMPELTON ALL SAINT'S DAY FESTIVAL—
WHAT'S UP WITH RALPH...?
HE'S BORING WHEN HE'S NOT BEING A SMART-ASS.
Com Piecey
HE'S BEEN QUIET AS A LAMB THESE PAST FEW DAYS.
Even though he hates them, he's just quietly wearing those wings...
EVEN KNOWING ABOUT THE "PREVIOUS ME", I AM MYSELF.
I CAN'T GO AND SEE MY BROTHER.
(IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT...)
I DOUBT CRAIG WILL COME. (THIS IS THE END.)
SEVEN DAYS HAVE PASSED.
I... (WHAT AM I DOING?)
Who is that guy? From a theatrical troupe?
Amazing, it's like he's real! Beauti ful
Whoa!
Wow!


I WANTED TO SEE HIM...
THE PROMISED DAY, RALPH.
FREEZE
Tong! Tong! Tong!

...
"RALPH"
...
REALLY WAS SPECIAL.
ALSO, HUMANS CAN'T REMEMBER OUR APPEARANCE.
ON A DAY LIKE THIS IT'S FINE.
...IT IS OK FOR A DEMON TO GO OUT IN FRONT OF HUMANS LOOKING LIKE THAT?
Everyone froze
ganzvecht
BUT I'LL KEEP MY PROMISE. I SIGNED, AND I HAVE TO COME THROUGH.
I... I'M NOT LIKE HIM, AND I-I'M NOT READY.
OH MY!
Huh?
AND FOR ME... (MY END IN THIS WORLD.)
BELTA, THE CONTRACT.
Ich verstehe
"HE" WOULD PROBABLY BE HAPPY, HUH...
THIS IS WHAT HE DREAMED OF.
Ah, real wings really are useful huh.
JUST SO. TRULY, YOU HAVE A GOOD ATTITUDE.

BELTA! THIS IS COMPLETELY WRONG, ISN'T IT?
LARVE
RALPH, HOW IS YOUR NAME SPELLED?
...R-A-L-P-H.
?
IT CAN'T BE... L-A-R.
Urk!
FORGIVE ME, THIS IS COMPLETELY WRONG.
What am I to do?
THIS IS UNHEARD OF.
Can't let this get out.
I'M SORRY, MASTER.
What now?
!!
!
!?

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, MASTER RALPH.
MR. FALSCH !?
!?
!!!
R I P
A FAULTY CONTRACT ...
flutter
FOR-GIVE ME,
BUT LET'S HAVE NEVER MADE THIS PACT.
WE NEVER MET.
Let's go home, Beita
AH...

Leben Sie wohl
Farewell
glance
RALPH!
!

...
CRAIG!
dash
...HE'S PLAYING IT SMART.
WOULDN'T YOU SAY SO, TOBIA?
—I HAVE TO AGREE.

THE CHILD'S SOUL THAT CAME TO THE GATES OF HEAVEN 12 YEARS AGO—
DON'T YOU THINK YOU WERE USED?
IT'S NOT AS THOUGH I DIDN'T HAVE A HAND IN IT, MYSELF.
YOU'LL PARDON ME FOR NOT WANTING TO COLLUDE WITH DEMONS.
AFTER ALL, THOSE IN HELL DON'T HAVE THE POWER TO REINCARNATE SOULS.
I WOULDN'T REALLY SAY I'M COLLUDING WITH THEM.
THERE'S SIMPLY...
AN UNWRITTEN PACT IN PLACE.

IN ORDER TO PROTECT WHAT'S IMPORTANT...
GOOD WORK,
MASTER.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DID WELL.
I APPRE-CIATE IT, BELTA.
OH NO, I RATHER ENJOYED BEING A LIBRARIAN.
...SO IT SEEMS.
I HEARD THAT YOU'VE BEEN MORE UPBEAT THAN WHEN YOU'RE IN THE CASTLE.
MAYBE THE WATER HERE REALLY IS MORE TO YOUR LIKING.
MASTER...
.....

I WAS JUST PRETENDING TO BE CHEERFUL BECAUSE I WAS HOMESICK.
...THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL LISTEN TO ME.
sigh
LORD ASTIN MUST BE A LITTLE BITTER.
He's in a bad mood...
"Conversation's Over" Pose
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT...
THAT ASIDE, EVEN NOW THE MASTER...
smirk
WHAT'S WRONG? WE'RE GOING BACK TO THE CASTLE WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.
THE CASTLE HAS GOTTEN FAIRLY AWFUL WITH ITS BUTLER OUT FOR SO LONG.
BELTA.
STILL CARES FOR... MASTER RALPH.

—12 YEARS AGO...
YES SIR!
GET READY FOR IT.
THE FEATHER, A TESTIMONY LEFT BEHIND ON THE GAMBLE OF A CHANCE MEETING...
THE MEMORIES OF RALPH'S SOUL OVER THOSE SEVEN YEARS—
YOU'VE FINALLY RETURNED.
I WILL REMEMBER... YOUR FEELINGS.

SO...
THE RALPH WHO LOVED ECK IS NO MORE —
Leben sie wohl……
It's time to part ways
—FAREWELL.

Vartrag Tale "Valafar & Belta"

VARTRAG TALE CHAPTER 5

BY OKI MAMIYA

THE END

RAW HUNTER/QC ISHITORI
TRANSLATOR KALENDEL
CLEANER ANPANMAYO
TYPESETTER REMY

THE-END-MANGA.LIVEJOURNAL.COM

HEAD TO OUR BLOG TO VOTE FOR THE
NEXT MANGA WE COMPLETE!

Well, no
HUH?
Sulk?
I FIGURED AS MUCH.
HM? THAT'S OUT OF THE BLUE, ASTIN.
DID YOU GET YOUR WINNINGS?
LORD ASTIN CASUALLY BROUGHT IT UP...
THAT'S RIGHT, BELTA WON THE BET.
About that rune.
...WHAT DO YOU WANT, BELTA?
It's not like I've forgotten about it
7 years + 12 years.
BUT THAT HAPPENED SO LONG AGO NOW ...
Die Belohnung der Wette
~The Bet's Winnings~
If you ask me so suddenly...
WELL, THEN...

Unlike you!
YEAH.
RALPH'S A SUPERB STUDENT, SO IT'S FINE.
RIGHT?
YOU'RE HERE ALL THE TIME.
ALL DAYS OFF, ARE THEY? YOUR TEACHERS WILL GET MAD AT YOU.
WELL, I'M GOOD AT IT. DON'T WORRY, BRO.
~RAL-PH!
Get away from him, Laithe-disease is contagious.
Ah!
LAITHE, TEACH ME THIS NEXT ♡
OH, SURE.
Let's see.
WELL NOW...
I DON'T KNOW HER.
HUH, WHO?
For me?
AND JUST NOW A LITTLE GIRL LEFT THIS FOR YOU, RALPH.
The cookies will be done soon.
MY MY, YOU GET ALONG WELL.
MS. BECKETT! ♡
DON'T BE JEALOUS, "BRO".
Grr
You should know better at your age!
What about it?

Regret
Sorry for the intrusion~.
float
Common Entrance
OH!
Wait, she knew you'd be here?
WHAT'S THIS? YOU'VE GOT SOME MOVES, RALPH.
I DON'T KNOW.
OH—?
BUT THAT ROSE ...
Is this new variety? Nice!
glance
Where?
WHAT, SHE'S STILL HERE!?
OVER THERE, LOOK. YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE HER?
THERE.. OH, THE ONE IN BLACK.
...IS THAT THE GIRL?
Here with her dad, maybe?

I MET MASTER RALPH'S EYES...
STRAIGHT ON.
I WAS SURPRISED THAT CRAIG KEPT IT AROUND.
Hmm
PERHAPS WE SHOULD SAY THAT IT "STUCK AROUND" RATHER THAN THAT HE KEPT IT...
...WE SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT ANYTHING, YOU KNOW?
BUT IF YOU WANT TO KINDLE SOMETHING NEW—!
No need for that.
THOUGH I'M SURE HE WOULDN'T THINK I'M THAT LIBRARIAN, LOOKING LIKE THIS...
THE "RALPHS" HAVE BEEN SENSITIVE TO THE UNUSUAL FOR GENERATIONS.

fwip
squeeze
BUT YOU'RE DOING IT TOO, BELTA
IS THAT A SIGN YOU INTEND TO FULLY CONSIGN THAT HUMAN TO OBLIVION?
WHAT!?
N-NO...
YOUR MOURNING DRESS.
HOW SPLENDID!
IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS I'M REMINDED OF YOUR DAYS AS A GYPSY.
float
...PUT ME DOWN, LORD ASTIN!
YOU REALLY ARE CUTE IN A SKIRT.
Next time wear one while you're big.
I HATE THIS FORM!
IF IT WASN'T A CONDITION, WHO WOULD DO THIS...?
Stop playing around!
Skirts are embarrassing~

Like a CASTLE.
One castle or another, c'mon!
YOU'RE JOKING.
Don't be silly
?
WHY WOULD YOU STILL WANT SOMETHING LIKE THAT ...?
ASK FOR SOMETHING MORE EXPENSIVE!
That's right!
"WHAT DO YOU WANT?"
Fools' Tales
"MASTER RALPH'S PICTURE BOOK"—
WELL... IT'D BE A KEEPSAKE, RIGHT?
...I WANTED TO READ IT, SO I TRIED BECOMING A LIBRARIAN, BUT...
I NEVER DID FIND IT.
WITH DRAWINGS OF A DARK ANGEL WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE MY MASTER...

"WHO PROFITED THE MOST?"
THE HOST, THE TRICKSTER, AND THE GUEST...
THE EVENING AT COLMA CASTLE WEARS ON——
AL-RIGHT, GOT IT!
TIME TO COLLECT BELTA'S PRIZE. I'LL STICK WITH HIM EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.
IF YOU ACCEPT MY CONDITION, I'LL DO IT FOR FREE.
HUH?
Condition? (Like what?)
Working for free? (You?)
I still haven't collected it...
I'D LIKE TO SAY "NO PROBLEM," BUT I'M NOT SURE WHERE IT IS.
I KNEW IT.
...THAT'S RIGHT, GO LOCATE IT, ASTIN.
rushe
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO ORDER ME AROUND?
what?
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO JUST LOCATE IT BEFORE BREAKFAST. CONSIDER IT A BONUS FOR THE PRICE OF THE DIRK.
...OH, BUT I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A CEREMONY, SO I CAN'T LEAVE THE CASTLE.
AH!
THEN I'LL GO...
THE BET'S WINNINGS / END

Vartraq Tale
Mamiya Oki's

VARTRAG TALE

CHAPTER 6

BY OKI MAMIYA

THE END

RAW HUNTER/QC ISHITORI
TRANSLATOR KALENDEL
CLEANER ANPANMAYO
TYPESETTER REMY

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HEAD TO OUR BLOG TO VOTE FOR THE NEXT MANGA WE COMPLETE!

ONCE UPON A TIME, A BOY NAMED RALPH LIVED ON A FARM.
HMM... HE WAS EVERY-THING A LAD SHOULD BE.
...LIKE ME?
Black Haired Eckbert
Der Scbwarz Geliebte
ONE WIN-TER NIGHT,
RALPH CHANCED UPON A SIGHT—
A SINGLE DEMON PLUCK ING OUT HIS GRANDFATHER'S SOUL.

I am here for your grandfather's soul, but I am no angel. This too may be destined.
...YES. ANGELS COME FOR PEOPLE, BUT FOR THIS OLD MAN A DEMON CAME.
..oh.. you can see me?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH GRAND-PA?
..WHO ARE YOU?
A DEMON ?
But well, I'll let it pass this one night
I can't overlook being seen in this form.
—but what an unusual child
THE DEMON SAID THAT, THEN FLEW FROM THE WINDOW AND DISAP-PEARED INTO THE NIGHT SKY.
I will take your soul.
Should you speak of it..
You must not speak of this to anyone else——
How-ever,

LITTLE RALPH TURNED 14.
HAVE A GOOD CHRIST-MAS!
7 YEARS PASSED.
SEE-YA!
SCHOOL WAS OUT FOR WINTER BREAK, SO HE WENT TO A NEARBY HILL TO PLAY ALONE.
SWISH
YOU OK?
... GEEZ, WATCH OUT!
OW!
WAAHH!
CRASH
RALPH MET A BOY.
— AND HE SAID NOTHING TO ANYONE.
LITTLE RALPH THOUGHT OVER WHAT THE DEMON SAID —
RALPH STOOD NEXT TO HIS COLD GRANDFA-THER AND LOOKED UP AT THE SKY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

THE BOY'S NAME WAS ECKBERT.
Gasp
...I'M FINE.
YOU CAME OUT OF NO-WHERE.
THE BOY HAD COME ON VACATION AND WAS STAYING WITH A FRIEND.
BEFORE LONG THE TWO GREW CLOSE.
I GUESS THEY BECAME "BEST FRIENDS"?
haha
YES... UNTIL THEN RALPH HAD NEVER HAD A BEST FRIEND.
AFTER THAT THE TWO OF THEM PLAYED TOGETHER EVERY DAY.
HOME WORK
Jonathan Livingston Seagull
ECKBERT WAS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND HE TOLD RALPH MANY THINGS.
FINALLY, THE DAY BEFORE HE HAD TO LEAVE, RALPH TOLD HIM HIS OWN SECRET.
ABOUT THE DEMON HE HADN'T SPOKEN OF TO ANYONE FOR SEVEN YEARS...

HE TOLD HIM?
...YES. ECKBERT LISTENED WITH GREAT INTEREST.
—IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE, RIGHT?
NO.
IT'S VERY INTERESTING.
...ECKBERT?
Yes — very much so.
HE WAS SMILING AND ENJOYING HIMSELF ...
AND HE SPOKE.
...though I told you not to speak of it.
AFTER HE SAID THAT, THE AREA SUDDENLY BECAME DARK AND A GUST OF WIND ENFOLDED HIM—
WHEN THE WIND LEFT, HE NO LONGER HAD ECKBERT'S FORM.

IT WAS THE SAME DEMON FROM SEVEN YEARS AGO——
Hmph.
Had you said nothing, I would have just left.
ECKBERT HAD TRANS-FORMED INTO THE DEMON.
RALPH HAD BROKEN HIS PACT WITH THE DEMON, BUT RALPH HAD TRUSTED IN THAT PACT.
...AT LAST, YOU TOOK YOUR TRUE FORM.
-SO? WHAT HAPPEN-ED TO RALPH?
DID THE DEMON GET HIS SOUL?
HM ...
RALPH SPOKE JOYFULLY TO THE DEMON HE HADN'T SEEN IN SEVEN YEARS.
I'VE BEEN WAITING! ...THIS WHOLE TIME.
?!

IT'S TRUE.
..I KNEW IT THE SECOND I SAW YOU.
THAT ECKBERT WAS YOU
THE DEMON WAS CONFUSED WHY HE WAS BEING WELCOMED.
WHEN YOU SAID BACK THEN THAT I WAS UNUSUAL, I WONDERED IF MAYBE I WAS A "SPECIAL" PERSON.
BUT IF THE BOY KNEW IT WAS HIM FROM THE START, DID THAT MEAN IT DIDN'T COUNT?
AS I WAS THINKING ABOUT THAT, I KNEW I WANTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN NO MATTER WHAT...
AND THAT YOU WERE A GOOD GUY.
SO—
Way prettier than the angels I've seen in picture books and things..
And I thought that even if you said you were a demon, you're beautiful
I WONDERED IF MAYBE I LOVED YOU...
AND... MAYBE YOU LOVED ME TOO.
I'm ready Take me with you
HE TRULY WAS AN UNUSUAL FELLOW ...
THE DEMON RAN OFF IN ORDER TO RETHINK HIS STRATEGY——
WHO KNOWS...? LET'S STOP THERE FOR NOW.
IT'S SLEEP TIME FOR LITTLE ONES.
AND THEN?
WHAT HAPPENED TO RALPH?
...HM.
SO THE DEMON WILL GET VANQUISHED IN THIS STORY, RIGHT? GREAT! ♡
.. WHY'S THAT GREAT?
BECAUSE IF NOT, MOM WOULD GET MAD
The priest at church says so, too.

Poof
HONESTLY!
AND HERE I TOLD YOU NOT TO TELL ANYONE ...
WHAT AN IMPERTINENT BOY.
YES, GOOD NIGHT.
GOOD NIGHT, GRANDPA.
Umph
YOU MUST BE JOKING.
YOU THINK I NEED TO BE SERIOUS WHEN I'M UP AGAINST AN OLD MAN?
Just be good and live out the rest of your days.
HEY, ECKBERT.
ARE YOU GOING TO COME AT ME DIRECTLY THIS TIME?
THESE DAYS EVEN A DEMON OUT OF AN OLD TALE HAS IT ROUGH...
1989 MIYAZAKI
Fin

Vantag Tale "Valafar"

Postskript

Vartrag Tale / Mamiya Oki

お久しぶりです&はじめまして、沖麻実也です。この度はこの「フェアトラーク寓話」、めでたく再演の運びとなりました。しかも二冊同時発行で！コミックスでこんな機会は多分この先一生ないんではないかと思ってます。いやあ～大変だった……、という話は楽しいおいといて。

この話は、以前一冊だけコミックスが出ていた作品です。その時は本書に、あたる『万聖節のラルフェ』の作品群の中にもう一話、『ヴァールハイトの迷夢』（次巻収録）が入ってました。その後に描いたコミックス未収録分の作品と合わせて、今回のフェアトラーク寓話新装判&新刊発行にあたり、大まかに『ラルフ編』『ベルタ編』に分けて再編集しました。それに伴い内容を個別でも読めるように少々補足&全編改訂。また、さすがに前世紀末の原稿（あらゆる方面で古いんです）、今読みやすい様に画面の整理をしたり修正をしたりと、ほぼ全員にわたって手直しを施しました。
言うはやすしですが、これがまた、私もアシさんも編集さんも印刷所さんもエライ大変な作業になっちゃって……（関係者各位に大感謝）。また、ロゴリニューアルも含めてコミックス全般のトータルデザイン（というか私の我が儘）に、まるっとつきあってくれたデザイナーさんにも感謝です。

絵柄自体は、当時の味というものもあるので、出来るだけ変えないように心がけました（場合によっては、当時の自分の絵を模写してみたり／笑）。
こういうことは、やり始めたらキリがないものですが、それでもキリはある…というわけで、これが最初で最後の機会だ、と、とことん手をかけました。少々専門的な話になりますが、現在の「アナログ原稿かデジタル原稿か」を迷う時代にあって『手描きかスクリーントーンか』（！）という原稿。今ならペラっとトーンを貼ったら終わりという効果を、当時は手描きで"点描"を打ったり、なけなしの技術を駆使して表現しようとしている、涙ぐましい努力の跡が見える原稿（当時のキモチ、覚えてます）。
絵柄を変えないように～なんて言ってますが、さすがに10年以上にわたっているうちに、ヴァラやベルタに「貫禄が減った」「可愛くなった」等の彼ら的にはあまりありがたくない変化が起きちゃったような……あれ？（アスティンは変わらない気がするのは何故なんだろう／笑；）

このフェアトラーク寓話は、私の数少ない漫画の中でも、一番最初の作品（とコミックス）。今回、内容と画面両方を見直す機会を持って、色々と忘れかけていたものが蘇ってきた気がしました。
そして、次元の違う時間をゆったりまったり生きている彼らとリンクするような気分で、しばらく凍結していた物語が、またこれから始まります。
今回一緒に出ているもう一冊と共に、よかったら宜しくお願いします。

2009.12／沖麻実也

Der rotblonde Verwalter,Berta.

Wiedersehen bis nächstes Mal.